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Health & Wellness[®] MAGAZINE

July 2023

Lee Edition - Monthly

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**SOAKING
UP THE
SUN AND
WELLNESS**

**PROTECTING
YOUR VISION**

THE IMPORTANCE
OF UV SAFETY

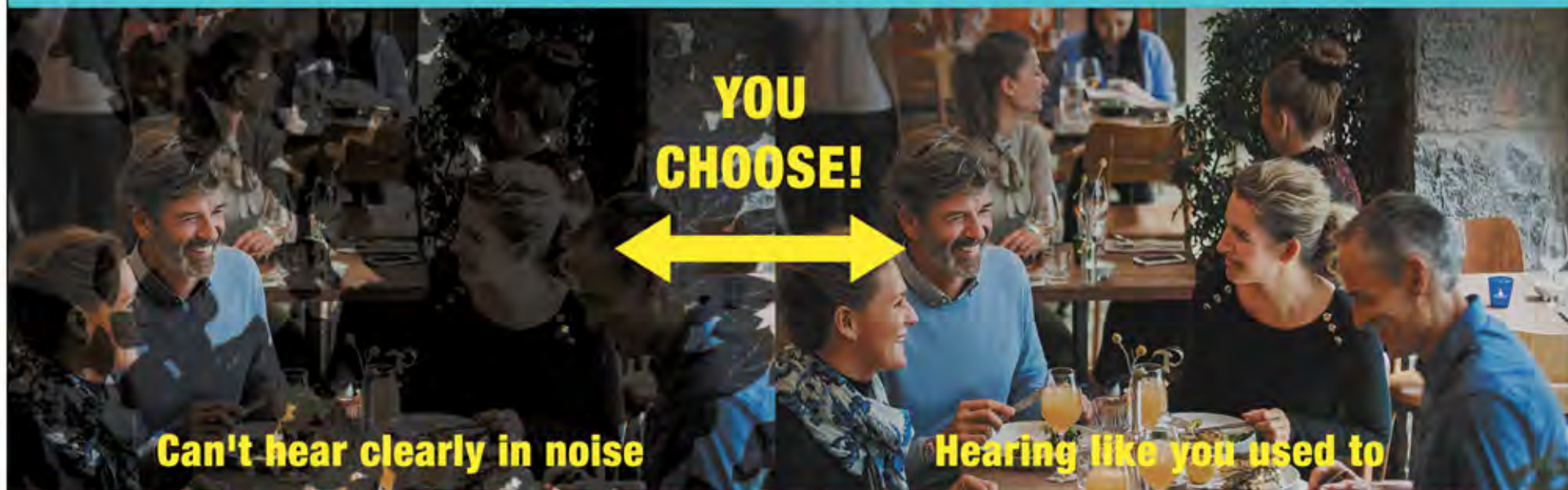
**DARK SPOTS ON
YOUR SKIN?**

**THE RELATIONSHIP
BETWEEN COVID-19
AND HAIR LOSS**

**THE VITAL ROLE OF
FAMILY HEALTH
AND FITNESS**

This New Hearing Treatment Technology Just Restored My Ability to Hear Well in Noise!

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3. Reduce Tinnitus "Ringing in Ears" Symptoms so I can sleep well and live better

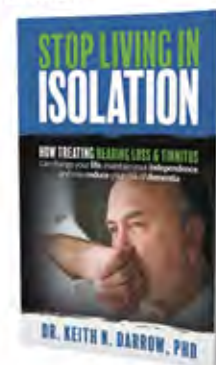
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OWNER / ACCOUNT EXECUTIVE
Cristan Gensing
cristan@gwhizmarketing.com

OWNER / CREATIVE DIRECTOR
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G WHIZ Marketing, LLC | 1630 Caxambas Court | Marco Island, Florida 34145

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HEARING AND MEMORY LOSS ARE CONNECTED

By John Nobile - HAS (Hearing Aid Specialist), BC-HIS, ACA



Hearing Loss Affects the Brain

Hearing loss doesn't just mean an older adult needs to turn up the TV. It's been linked to a range of health problems, including dementia. The latest aging research not only shows the two are connected but also leads scientists to believe that hearing loss may cause dementia. If you have hearing loss, you have a greater chance of developing dementia, according to a 2020 Lancet commission report that lists hearing loss as one of the top risk factors for dementia.

Brain Strain and Social Isolation

Hearing loss can make the brain work harder, forcing it to strain to hear and fill in the gaps. That comes at the expense of other thinking and memory systems. Another possibility is hearing loss causes the aging brain to shrink more quickly. A third possibility is that hearing loss makes people less socially engaged, which is hugely essential to remain intellectually stimulated. If you can't hear very well, you may not go out as much, so the brain is less engaged and active.

Quantifying Hearing Loss's Impact

Hearing loss is estimated to account for 8% of dementia cases. This means that hearing loss may be responsible for 800,000 of the nearly ten million new cases of dementia diagnosed each year.

Studies from the National Institute of Health show an association between hearing impairment and dementia while supporting the hypothesis that hearing impairment contributes to cognitive dysfunction in older adults.

Reducing the Risk of Dementia

Johns Hopkins is leading a large National Institute on Aging study to see if hearing aids can safeguard seniors' mental processes. The study has multiple locations and has recruited nearly 1,000 people ages 70-84 with hearing loss. One group is provided hearing aids, while another group receives aging education. By early 2023, the study should provide definitive results on whether treating hearing loss reduces cognitive decline risk. In essence, we'll know whether the use of hearing aids can potentially reduce brain aging and the risk of dementia.

Other Effects on Health

Hearing loss has long-term effects on health. It's believed to increase the risk for falls and depression. It also leads to higher health care costs:

People with hearing loss have, over ten years, a 47% increased hospitalization rate. Hearing loss is associated with an increased risk of institutionalization, an increased risk for dementia, and increased health care costs overall for all ages.

In Summary

Individuals with hearing loss are at an increased risk for developing cognitive decline and dementia. New research finds that treating hearing loss is the single most modifiable risk factor for reducing the risk of dementia. While your risk increases with the degree of hearing loss, it is essential to note that even mild hearing loss can increase your risk by as much as 200%! If you or a loved one struggles to hear clearly, we can help reduce your risk of dementia in Cape Coral and Fort Myers, FL., with our 5-star-rated hearing care.

John Nobile, HAS, BC-HIS, ACA is a licensed hearing aid specialist and an ACA-certified audioprosthetologist who is also board-certified in hearing instrument sciences. With over 55 years of experience, he has transformed thousands of lives in Cape Coral

and Fort Myers, FL, by providing his patients with the gift of sound. He is also a former veteran committed to providing all veterans with free services.



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CONFIDENCE CHECK

Garramone Plastic Surgery's all-in-one Mommy Makeover reunites women with their pre-baby selves by addressing multiple post-pregnancy body concerns.

RALPH R. GARRAMONE, MD, FACS

A woman's body image can decline with loss of breast volume, which can result in sagging, irregularly shaped, and droopy breasts. After pregnancy, localized abdominal stretching, excess skin, fatty deposits, and stretch marks may be the hallmarks of pregnancy, but they aren't irreversible," says Ralph Garramone, M.D., a board-certified cosmetic and plastic surgeon and founder of Garramone Plastic Surgery, where he's been helping women in the Fort Myers area get back to their pre-baby selves since 2002.



"While there's no denying the joy of pregnancy, child-birth, and nursing, the resulting physical changes can take a toll on a woman's body and psyche, which can result in decreased self-esteem. Every woman can have excellent body confidence," says Dr. Garramone.

In addition to offering a cache of face, breast, and body procedures, as well as skincare treatments with his team of award-winning, medically trained Aestheticians, the practice developed the Mommy Makeover for women of all ages who want to experience a single recovery instead of multiple downtimes from individual surgeries.

Patients coming in for this procedure, Dr. Garramone notes, usually have excess skin, stretch marks, and underlying fascia fatigue (the tough, muscular layer unresponsive to exercise). To address these issues, the Mommy Makeover may involve abdominoplasty, or a tummy tuck, and an array of breast surgeries to address individual concerns with attention to post-pregnancy problem zones simultaneously.

"We aim to give each patient the best results by listening to what bothers them most," says Dr. Garramone.

GREAT EXPECTATIONS

"Plastic surgery is a life-changing, personal experience," Dr. Garramone says, "and we take a detail-oriented approach to procedural explanations while providing realistic post-surgical expectations."

As for the procedure at the practice's state-of-the-art, accredited surgical facility, patients should plan on 2.5 to 4.5 hours for surgery with additional time spent in recovery.

According to Dr. Garramone, recovery isn't what it used to be 20 years ago. Dr. Garramone uses a long-lasting nerve blocker to aid in patients' discomfort; patients can expect to rest for approximately 10 to 14 days before returning to normal daily life, including work or at-home activities. Most patients are back to 90% of their normal daily activities within a month.

Having performed thousands of surgeries for adults and children throughout his career, Dr. Garramone approaches every case with familiar ease. Forever humble, he's received numerous accolades, contributes to many medical publications, and enjoys the creative aspect of his work. He feels it is an honor to use his skills to change lives for the better.

"It's an exciting field to work in because there's always some wonderful new technology on the horizon," he says.

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PROTECTING YOUR VISION

THE IMPORTANCE OF UV SAFETY

By Sarah Johnson, O.D. | Optometric Physician

The warm rays of the sun can be inviting, but it's important to remember that prolonged exposure to ultraviolet (UV) radiation can have detrimental effects on our vision. Unprotected eyes are vulnerable to conditions such as cataract formation, age-related macular degeneration (AMD), and other eye disorders. In this article, we will explore the significance of UV safety and provide valuable tips on how to safeguard your vision from the harmful effects of the sun.

Understanding UV Radiation

UV radiation is a type of energy emitted by the sun. It falls into three categories: UVA, UVB, and UVC. UVC radiation is mostly absorbed by the Earth's atmosphere, but both UVA and UVB rays can cause damage to our eyes. When our eyes are exposed to excessive amounts of UV radiation over time, the risk of developing eye conditions increases significantly. The two most common disorders associated with UV exposure are cataracts and age-related macular degeneration (AMD).

Cataracts: Clouding of the Lens

Cataracts occur when the clear lens inside the eye becomes cloudy, leading to blurred vision and eventual vision loss. UV radiation can be a risk factor for cataract development, particularly in individuals who spend extended periods outdoors without proper eye protection. The harmful UV rays can damage proteins in the lens, causing them to clump together and form a cloudy area. Over time, this cloudiness increases, impeding the passage of light and affecting vision.

Age-Related Macular Degeneration (AMD): Central Vision Loss

AMD is a progressive eye condition that affects the macula, the central part of the retina responsible for sharp, detailed vision. While the exact cause of AMD is not fully understood, prolonged exposure to UV radiation is believed to contribute to its development. UV rays can trigger oxidative stress in the macular cells, leading to cellular damage and inflammation. Over time, this damage can result in the loss of central vision, making it challenging to read, recognize faces, or perform other crucial tasks.

Preventing UV-Related Eye Disorders

Protecting your vision from the harmful effects of UV radiation is vital. Here are some practical steps you can take to reduce your risk of eye disorders:



Wear UV-blocking sunglasses: Opt for sunglasses that provide 100% UVA and UVB protection. Look for a label that states "UV 400" or "100% UV protection" to ensure proper shielding from harmful rays.

Choose wide-brimmed hats: Pair your sunglasses with a wide-brimmed hat to further shield your eyes and face from direct sunlight.

Seek shade during peak hours: When the sun is at its strongest, typically between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m., try to stay in shaded areas or create your shade using umbrellas or canopies.

Use protective eyewear: If you engage in outdoor activities that expose your eyes to potential hazards (e.g., sports, construction), wear protective goggles or safety glasses designed to block UV radiation.

Get regular eye check-ups: Routine eye examinations can help detect early signs of UV-related eye disorders and allow for timely intervention.

UV safety is crucial for maintaining healthy vision. Prolonged exposure to UV radiation can lead to cataract formation, age-related macular degeneration (AMD), and other eye disorders. By adopting simple yet effective measures like wearing UV-blocking sunglasses, seeking shade, and using protective eyewear, we can significantly reduce our risk of these conditions. Let us prioritize your eye health and keep your vision healthy this summer.

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SARAH JOHNSON, O.D.
Optometric Physician

Dr. Johnson is a board-certified optometric physician that provides a wide variety of primary eye care

to patients. She completed her undergraduate studies at The University of South Florida, Tampa, and received her Doctor of Optometry in 2008 from Nova Southeastern University, Fort Lauderdale, where she graduated with honors. Her Clinical Internships include Fort Lauderdale Eye Institute, Braverman Eye Center, Pediatric Ophthalmology Consultants of Plantation, and The Eye Institute of Nova Southeastern University.

Dr. Johnson has been practicing optometry for over fifteen years. She began her practice at Tallman Eye Institute, in Lawrence, Massachusetts. After relocating to Florida in 2014, she went on to establish her own practice, Johnson Eyecare while also devoting time to The Lions Club Eye Clinic, a non-profit foundation that provides eye care to low-income patients with no medical insurance. Dr. Johnson is a member of the American Optometric Association, Florida Optometric Association and Southwest Florida Optometric Association.

Dr. Johnson was born in Costa Rica and was raised in both Costa Rica and Fort Myers, Florida. As a result, she is fluent in both English and Spanish. Dr. Johnson is grateful to have the opportunity to be able to provide her optometric knowledge, skills and experience to the Fort Myers community and surrounding areas.

Dr. Johnson lives in Fort Myers with her daughter Amelia and son Andres, where they enjoy traveling and spending time outdoors. In her spare time, she enjoys CrossFit, Yoga, running, biking, paddleboarding and scuba diving.

TREATING VENOUS ULCERS

Expert Care from Vascular and Vein Surgeons

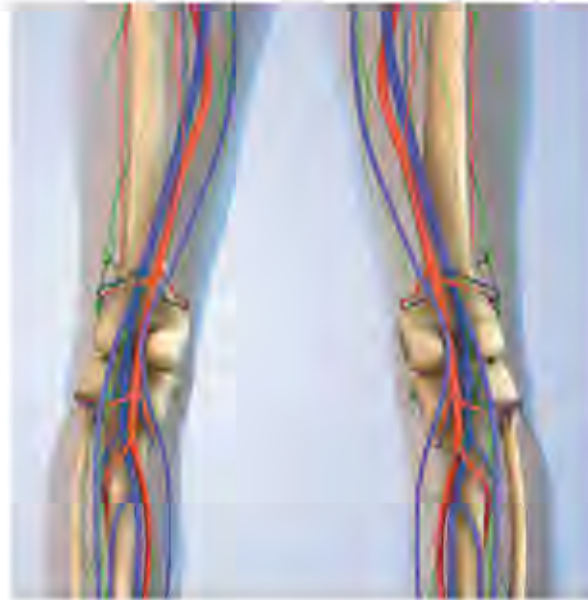
Venous ulcers, also known as venous stasis ulcers, can be debilitating wounds that occur due to poor circulation in the legs. Seeking specialized care from vascular and vein surgeons is crucial for effectively treating these ulcers. Vascular and vein surgeons are medical professionals with extensive expertise in diagnosing and managing conditions related to blood vessels including arteries and veins. In this article, we will explore the invaluable role of vascular and vein surgeons in the treatment of venous ulcers. Their comprehensive knowledge and specialized interventions can provide patients with targeted care, promote healing, and improve their overall quality of life.

Accurate Diagnosis and Evaluation

Vascular and vein specialists play a pivotal role in accurately diagnosing venous ulcers. These specialists have a deep understanding of the underlying venous insufficiency that leads to ulcer formation. They employ various diagnostic techniques, such as ultrasound imaging, to evaluate the blood flow and identify any vein abnormalities. By precisely diagnosing the condition, vascular and vein specialists can tailor treatment plans to address the specific needs of each patient.

Comprehensive Treatment Plans

Vascular and vein specialists formulate comprehensive treatment plans for venous ulcers that encompass various interventions. They collaborate with other healthcare professionals, such as wound care specialists and dermatologists, to ensure a multidisciplinary approach. These specialists may prescribe medications to improve circulation, reduce inflammation, and alleviate associated symptoms. Additionally, they employ compression therapy techniques, customizing the type and intensity of compression to suit each patient's unique circumstances. Vascular and vein surgeons also perform minimally invasive procedures, such as endovenous laser treatment or sclerotherapy, to address underlying vein abnormalities contributing to ulcer formation.



Expert Wound Care

Vascular and vein surgeons are skilled in providing expert wound care for venous ulcers. They have extensive knowledge of advanced wound care techniques and the latest evidence-based practices. These specialists meticulously clean and dress the wounds, considering factors such as wound moisture balance and infection prevention. They may employ specialized dressings, such as hydrogels or foam dressings, to facilitate the healing process. Additionally, vascular and vein specialists are trained in the application of advanced therapies like negative pressure wound therapy (NPWT) or bioengineered skin substitutes, which can expedite healing and promote tissue regeneration. Regular follow-up visits enable them to monitor the wound's progress and make necessary adjustments to the treatment plan.

Long-Term Management and Prevention

Vascular and vein surgeons provide long-term management strategies for venous ulcers, focusing on preventing recurrence and promoting overall vascular health. They educate patients about self-care practices, emphasizing the importance of maintaining proper skincare and recognizing early signs of ulcer recurrence. Vascular and vein surgeons also guide individuals on lifestyle modifications,

including weight management, regular exercise, leg elevation, and smoking cessation, to improve blood circulation and minimize swelling. These surgeons emphasize the significance of ongoing monitoring to identify any changes in the condition and ensure timely intervention when needed.

The expertise of vascular and vein surgeons is invaluable in the comprehensive treatment of venous ulcers. Through accurate diagnosis, tailored treatment plans, expert wound care, and long-term management strategies, these specialists provide patients with the highest level of care, promoting healing, relieving symptoms, and reducing the risk of ulcer recurrence. Seeking their specialized expertise is crucial for optimal outcomes and improved quality of life.

The Vascular and Vein Center at Gulfcoast Surgeons is one of the first and most respected vein clinics in Southwest Florida. Our surgeons, Dr. Abraham Sadighi and Dr. Johan Escribano have performed thousands of vascular and vein surgeries over the past 28 years. We focus on diseases of the vascular system that can range from harmless but unattractive spider veins to dangerous conditions such as peripheral artery disease. Our caring and dedicated team will help you identify problems and offer the best treatment options for you at any of our three locations.



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WHAT IS THAT LUMP ON MY FOOT OR ANKLE?

By Dr. Lori DeBlasi

What Is a Ganglion Cyst?

A ganglion cyst is a sac filled with a jellylike fluid that originates from a tendon sheath or joint capsule. The word "ganglion" means knot and is used to describe the knot-like mass or lump that forms below the surface of the skin.

Ganglion cysts are among the most common benign soft-tissue masses. Although they most often occur on the wrist, they also frequently develop on the foot—usually on the top, but elsewhere as well. Ganglion cysts vary in size, may get smaller or larger and may even disappear completely, only to return later.

Causes of Ganglion Cysts

The exact cause of ganglion cysts is unknown. However, they may arise from trauma, both isolated events or repetitive trauma.

Symptoms of Ganglion Cysts

A ganglion cyst is associated with one or more of the following symptoms:

- A noticeable lump—often this is the only symptom experienced
- Tingling or burning, if the cyst is touching a nerve
- Dull pain or ache, which may indicate the cyst is pressing against a tendon or joint
- Difficulty wearing shoes due to irritation between the lump and the shoe

Risk factors that may increase the risk of ganglion cysts include:

- **Sex and age.** Ganglion cysts can develop in anyone, but they most often occur in women between the ages of 20 and 40.
- **Osteoarthritis.** People who have wear-and-tear arthritis in the finger joints closest to the fingernails are at higher risk of developing ganglion cysts near those joints.
- **Joint or tendon injury.** Joints or tendons that have been injured are more likely to develop ganglion cysts.

Diagnosis of Ganglion Cysts

The lump will be visually apparent, and, when pressed in a certain way, it should move freely



underneath the skin. Sometimes the surgeon will shine a light through the cyst or remove a small amount of fluid from the cyst for evaluation. Your doctor may take an x-ray, and in some cases, additional imaging studies (ultrasound or MRI) may be ordered.

Nonsurgical Treatment

There are various options for treating a ganglion cyst on the foot:

- **Monitoring but no treatment.** If the cyst causes no pain and does not interfere with walking, the surgeon may decide it is best to carefully watch the cyst over a period of time.
- **Shoe modifications.** Wearing shoes that do not rub the cyst or cause irritation may be advised. In addition, placing a pad inside the shoe may help reduce pressure against the cyst.
- **Aspiration and injection.** This technique involves draining the fluid and then injecting a steroid medication into the mass. More than one session may be needed. Although this approach is successful in some cases, in many others, the cyst returns.

When Is Surgery Needed?

When other treatment options fail or are not appropriate, the cyst may need to be surgically removed. While the recurrence rate associated with surgery is much lower than that experienced with aspiration and injection therapy, there are nevertheless cases in which the ganglion cyst returns.

Lori DeBlasi, DPM

Dr. Lori DeBlasi is certified by the American Board of Foot and Ankle Surgery®. Dr. DeBlasi works at Family Foot & Leg Center at the Estero office. She is accepting new patients. To make an appointment, call 239-430-3668 or visit www.NaplesPodiatrist.com.



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LifeCare. An Investment in Your Future, Happiness, and Peace of Mind.

Not only is Southwest Florida one of the country's most popular retirement destinations; it is also home to a number of senior living communities. Makes sense. As retirees who've come to the area for the warm weather, beautiful Gulf Coast beaches, golf courses, and other attractions get older, they may need the support, services and security senior living offers.

But as they begin their search, an area expert has advice.

"I would tell anyone looking into senior living to do their homework," says Rachel Henderson, Director of Marketing and Community Outreach at The Terraces at Bonita Springs, a Life Plan Community in Bonita Springs, Florida. "There are significant differences between communities and what they offer – and those differences can greatly affect their future."

She continues, "A rental community may be attractive at first, but it may not be the best option for the long term. If health issues arise, a rental community may not have the necessary support or care services in place, or those services may be costly.

"I recommend everyone consider a Life Plan Community. They're perfect for active, independent adults. They offer services, amenities, and a continuum of care designed to address the changing needs of residents as they age."

Explore The Terraces

Located in Southwest Florida, The Terraces at Bonita Springs is a Life Plan Community offering luxury retirement living complemented by access to highly rated health care services – all under one roof.

Continuum of care

The Terraces offers independent living, assisted living, memory support, skilled nursing, and rehabilitation.

Spacious residences

The community features a variety of elegantly appointed residences in one-, two- and three-bedroom options. Every residence is maintenance-free and includes a screened lanai and a personal one-car garage. With complimentary valet services, coming and going is easy and convenient.



Incomparable lifestyle

Residents of The Terraces enjoy an active, social lifestyle rich in services and amenities. Chef-prepared meals are served in fine, private, or casual dining venues. The community features resort-inspired amenities, including a putting green, indoor and outdoor pools, fitness center and wellness programs, tennis and bocce courts, and more. A robust calendar of events and programs keeps residents connected and engaged.

Quality construction

The Terraces is designed to withstand hurricane-strength wind and is situated 16 feet above sea level.

Associated fees

As a Life Plan Community, The Terraces requires an entrance fee (also called a buy-in) and a monthly fee:

- The entrance fee is a one-time investment based on the size of the residence selected. Payment of this fee entitles the resident to lifetime residence at The Terraces plus priority access to the full continuum of care if it's ever needed. Depending on the contract type, a portion of the entrance fee could be refundable to the resident or their estate if they leave The Terraces for any reason.
- The monthly fee covers the services and amenities at the community.

One of the most significant differences at The Terraces is the Type A LifeCare contract.

What is LifeCare?

LifeCare is a specific contract type offered by some Life Plan Communities that provides seniors with a safety net of care and services at predictable costs.

The Type A LifeCare contract allows a senior to take control of the future, protect their estate, and proactively plan for any eventual care needs. With the Type A contract, a resident's monthly fee will not increase substantially even if higher levels of care are needed.

"I know it can be confusing at first," notes Rachel, "but it's really quite simple. With a Type A LifeCare contract, a resident will pay the same monthly fee, whether they're in independent living or skilled nursing. This is a financial advantage that can save them money in the long run should their health needs change as they grow older."

She continues, "A move to The Terraces is an investment. It's an investment in your health, happiness and security."

Make your plan

To learn more about LifeCare and the lifestyle offered at The Terraces, schedule a community tour and one-on-one meeting with a Senior Living Sales Counselor by calling 239-204-3469.

Join us for our next event on Wednesday, July 19.

3:00 p.m. – Cocktails & Hors d'oeuvres
4:00 p.m. – Curtain Opens

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At The Terraces, a luxury Life Plan Community with a Type A LifeCare contract, life's next act gets even more spectacular. Join us for one of the many events residents enjoy and get an inside look for yourself. What's on the playbill this time? A one-woman Broadway musical performance by Whitney Grace.

*Space is limited. Valet parking will be available.
Please RSVP by Wednesday, July 12.*

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KIDNEY STONES

A kidney stone is a solid mass made up of tiny crystals. One or more stones can be in the kidney or ureter at the same time.

Causes, incidence, and risk factors

Kidney stones are common. Some types run in families. They often occur in premature infants.

There are different types of kidney stones. The exact cause depends on the type of stone.

Stones can form when urine contains too much of certain substances. These substances can create small crystals that become stones. The stones take weeks or months to form.

- Calcium stones are most common. They are more common in men between age 20 - 30. Calcium can combine with other substances, such as oxalate (the most common substance), phosphate, or carbonate, to form the stone. Oxalate is present in certain foods such as spinach. It's also found in vitamin C supplements. Diseases of the small intestine increase your risk of these stones.

- Cystine stones can form in people who have cystinuria. This disorder runs in families and affects both men and women.

- Struvite stones are mostly found in women who have a urinary tract infection. These stones can grow very large and can block the kidney, ureter, or bladder.

- Uric acid stones are more common in men than in women. They can occur with gout, diabetes, hypertension, obesity or chemotherapy.

- Other substances also can form stones, including the medications, acyclovir, and triamterene among others.

The biggest risk factor for kidney stones is not drinking enough fluids. Kidney stones are more likely to occur if you make less than 1 liter of urine a day. That's slightly more than a quart.

Symptoms

You may not have symptoms until the stones move down the tubes (ureters) through which urine empties into your bladder. When this happens, the stones can block the flow of urine out of the kidneys.

The main symptom is severe pain that starts suddenly and may go away suddenly:

- Pain may be felt in the belly area or side of the back
- Pain may move to groin area (groin pain) or testicles (testicle pain)

Other symptoms can include:

- | | |
|------------------------|------------|
| • Abnormal urine color | • Fever |
| • Blood in the urine | • Nausea |
| • Chills | • Vomiting |

Signs and tests

The health care provider will perform a physical exam. The belly area (abdomen) or back might feel sore.

Tests that may be done include:

- Blood tests to check calcium, phosphorus, uric acid, and electrolyte levels
- Kidney function tests
- Urinalysis to see crystals and look for red blood cells in urine
- Examination of the stone to determine the type

Stones or a blockage can be seen on:

- Abdominal CT scan
- Abdominal/kidney MRI
- Abdominal x-rays
- Intravenous pyelogram (IVP)
- Kidney ultrasound
- Retrograde pyelogram

Treatment

Treatment depends on the type of stone and the severity of your symptoms.

Kidney stones that are small usually pass on their own. When the stone passes, the urine should be strained so the stone can be saved and tested.

Drink at least 6 - 8 glasses of water per day to produce a large amount of urine.

Pain can be severe enough to need narcotic pain relievers. Some people with severe pain from kidney stones need to stay in the hospital. You may need to get fluids through a vein (intravenous).

Depending on the type of stone, your doctor may prescribe medicine to decrease stone formation or help break down and remove the material that is causing the stone. Medications can include:

- Allopurinol (for uric acid stones)
- Antibiotics (for struvite stones)
- Diuretics
- Phosphate solutions
- Sodium bicarbonate or sodium citrate
- Water pills (thiazide diuretics)

Surgery is usually needed if:

- The stone is too large to pass on its own
- The stone is growing
- The stone is blocking urine flow and causing an infection or kidney damage
- The pain cannot be controlled

Today, most treatments are much less invasive than in the past, ie,

- Extracorporeal shock-wave lithotripsy is used to remove stones slightly smaller than a half an inch that

are located near the kidney or ureter. It uses sound or shock waves to break up stones. Then, the stones leave the body in the urine.

- Percutaneous nephrolithotomy is used for large stones in or near the kidney, or when the kidneys or surrounding areas are incorrectly formed. The stone is removed with tube (endoscope) that is inserted into the kidney through a small surgical cut.

- Ureteroscopy, placing a very small camera inside the ureter to remove or break the stone. May be used for stones in the lower urinary tract.

Expectations (prognosis)

Kidney stones are painful but usually can be removed from the body without causing permanent damage.

Kidney stones often come back, especially if the cause is not found and treated.

If treatment is significantly delayed, damage to the kidney or other serious complications can occur.

Complications or Side Effects of urinary stones

- Decrease or loss of function in the affected kidney
- Kidney damage, scarring
- Obstruction of the ureter (acute unilateral obstructive uropathy)
- Recurrence of stones
- Urinary tract infection

Prevention

If you have a history of stones, drink plenty of fluids (6 - 8 glasses of water per day) to produce enough urine. Depending on the type of stone, you might need medications or diet changes to prevent the stones from coming back. Is important to find out why the person forms stones so, prevention could be started soon.



Alejandro Miranda-Sousa, MD
Mark Leo, MD

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MEMORY MATTERS

By Amy Hoffmann Schenk, RN, BSN, MS Ed, Community Engagement Lead
Neuropsychiatric Research Center of SW Florida

Is it normal to have problems with our memory as we get older? Are you concerned that your memory seems to be getting worse? Do you just chalk it up to old age? Doesn't everyone have memory problems as they get older? Why is early detection so important?

These are some of the questions that are common around the topic of memory loss. According to the National Institute of Health (NIH), while age is the most important known risk factor for the disease, old age does *not* cause Alzheimer's disease. Alzheimer's disease is the most common form of dementia, and it's estimated that 1/9 (one in nine people) aged 65 and older have Alzheimer's. That roughly translates to approximately 6.7 million people in the United States who have Alzheimer's disease, per the 2023 Alzheimer's Association facts and figures document. Here in Florida, it is estimated that around 580,000 people are living with Alzheimer's disease.

It is quite common for people to get the terms Alzheimer's and dementia confused. The best way to describe dementia is that dementia is a syndrome, characterized by a decline in mental functioning. Thinking, remembering, and reasoning are all impacted, and these changes are typically not reversible. In addition, to have a diagnosis of dementia, these changes in cognition are significant enough to interfere with your daily life.

Alzheimer's disease is a type of dementia, and estimated to be between 60 – 80% of all cases of dementia. Alzheimer's disease is progressive (it continues to get worse), neurodegenerative (nerve cells in the brain, called neurons, become damaged and lose function and die), and while there are a number of early warning signs of Alzheimer's disease, decline in short term memory is common. There are many different types of dementia. Vascular dementia, Lewy body dementia, Frontotemporal dementia and mixed dementia are several of the most common types.

Why is early detection important? Currently, early detection and screening procedures are very common for a variety of illnesses. You may have



already had one or more of these types of screening. Cholesterol screening, Pap tests, fecal occult blood testing, colonoscopy, mammography, diabetes screening tests and the PSA (prostate specific antigen) blood test are all examples of screening tests. Having a memory screen should be a part of an annual health checkup.

You may be wondering why you should have a memory screen. There are a variety of reasons that having a memory screen is important. One of the main reasons is to find out why someone is experiencing memory concerns. There are a variety of different conditions that can impact one's memory that are reversible and/or treatable. Conditions such as thyroid issues, vitamin B12 deficiency, sleep apnea, depression, medication interactions, excessive alcohol use, even significant stress and anxiety can cause memory issues. These causes can be addressed. Even if you are not currently concerned about your memory, you can be proactive with your brain health by having a baseline memory screen done.

Regular memory screening may be beneficial in the early detection of Alzheimer's disease and other forms of dementia. The risk of dementia increases with age. When diagnosed early enough, a combination of lifestyle changes and medical treatments

can potentially delay the progression. The information obtained from the screening is not a diagnosis but will better enable you to take charge of your brain health.

What is a memory screen? Memory screening promotes healthier aging and is one thing you can do to try to prevent or delay the onset of symptoms associated with Alzheimer's. Annual memory testing is highly recommended for adults ages fifty or older, or even earlier if you are experiencing memory problems that worry you. It is a positive, proactive step you can take right now to take charge of your brain health. You will get a free cognitive assessment, plus education about aging, memory, lifestyle factors and referrals to appropriate community resources.

To make it easy to get a memory screen, the Neuropsychiatric Research Center of Southwest Florida (NPRC) will be offering free memory screens on August 8th and 9th. The screenings will take place at 14271 Metropolis Avenue, Fort Myers, 33912. To schedule your free memory screen, contact our office at 239-939-7777. Please bring a list of your current medications to your appointment. The screening and all services provided at our center are at no cost to you and we do not ask for any insurance information. At the Neuropsychiatric Research center there are many cutting edge clinical studies that are focused on addressing memory issues.

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**Contact NPRC at 239-939-7777
today for your free memory screen.**

Unraveling the Complexity of Brain Diseases

The human brain is an intricate organ that governs our thoughts, emotions, and actions. However, within this complexity lies a vulnerability to various disorders that can profoundly impact an individual's quality of life. Brain diseases encompass a wide range of neurological disorders, each with its unique characteristics and challenges. This article will shed light on some of the most prevalent brain diseases, exploring their causes, symptoms, and potential treatment avenues, while emphasizing the importance of ongoing research in this field.

Alzheimer's Disease: Alzheimer's disease, a progressive neurodegenerative disorder, is one of the most common forms of dementia. It is characterized by memory loss, cognitive decline, and behavioral changes. Researchers have identified certain genetic factors, such as mutations in the amyloid precursor protein (APP) and presenilin genes, as potential contributors to the development of Alzheimer's disease.¹ Additionally, the accumulation of amyloid-beta plaques and tau protein tangles in the brain has been linked to the pathology of this disease.² Although there is currently no cure for Alzheimer's disease, ongoing research focuses on developing interventions to slow down its progression and improve patients' quality of life.

Parkinson's Disease: Parkinson's disease is a chronic, progressive movement disorder that affects millions worldwide. It is primarily caused by the loss of dopamine-producing cells in the substantia nigra region of the brain. Genetic mutations, exposure to environmental toxins, and oxidative stress have been implicated in the development of Parkinson's disease.³ Tremors, rigidity, bradykinesia, and postural instability are hallmark symptoms of this condition. Treatment options include medications to manage symptoms, deep brain stimulation, and physical therapy.⁴

Multiple Sclerosis: Multiple sclerosis (MS) is an autoimmune disease characterized by the immune system mistakenly attacking the protective covering of nerve fibers, known as myelin, in the central nervous system. The exact cause of MS remains unknown, but it is believed to involve a combination of genetic and environmental factors.⁵ MS presents with a wide range of symptoms,

including fatigue, impaired coordination, muscle weakness, and cognitive difficulties. Disease-modifying therapies, rehabilitation programs, and symptom management strategies are the current approaches in managing MS.⁶

Autoimmune Encephalitis: Autoimmune encephalitis is a relatively rare but increasingly recognized group of brain diseases characterized by inflammation of the brain due to an autoimmune response. It occurs when the immune system mistakenly targets proteins within the brain, leading to neurological symptoms. Antibodies targeting specific proteins, such as NMDA receptors, LGI1, and GABAB receptors, have been identified in different forms of autoimmune encephalitis.⁷ Symptoms can range from psychiatric manifestations, such as psychosis and mood changes, to neurological symptoms, including seizures, memory problems, and movement disorders. Treatment typically involves immunotherapy, such as corticosteroids, intravenous immunoglobulins, and plasma exchange, to suppress the autoimmune response and reduce inflammation.⁸

Conclusion: Brain diseases continue to present significant challenges in the medical field, impacting the lives of millions of individuals worldwide. Understanding the underlying causes, symptoms, and available treatment options is crucial in advancing research and developing effective interventions. Ongoing research aims to unravel the intricate mechanisms involved in these brain diseases, ultimately leading to improved diagnostic tools, more targeted therapies, and the possibility of finding cures. By supporting scientific endeavors and raising awareness, we can foster progress in the battle against these complex neurological disorders, offering hope for individuals and their families facing these challenges.



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At Paragon Healthcare, we offer services in home infusion therapy, infusion center site-of-care operations, specialty pharmaceuticals, rare disease care, bleeding disorder treatment and management, and in-office infusion suite solutions for physicians.

Some of the medication Paragon administers to treat the brain diseases described above, as well as others, include:

- Aduhelm
- Amvuttra
- Briumvi
- Immunoglobulin both SCIG and IVIG
- Lemtrada
- Leqembi
- Migraine Therapy
- Ocrevus
- Onpattro
- Radicava
- Rituxan (including biosimilar's)
- Soliris
- Solu Medrol
- Tysabri
- Ultomiris
- Uplizna
- Vyepi
- Vyvgart

Nationwide, Paragon administered more than 2,200 infusions in May with the above-mentioned medications and more than 9,900 infusions year to date.

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DARK SPOTS ON YOUR SKIN?

An Advanced Treatment Can Provide Clear, Glowing Skin

By Joseph Onorato, MD, FAAD

Have you noticed that your skin is starting to look dull, blotchy, or discolored? Hyperpigmentation, melasma, discoloration, or "age spots" are common skin concerns for many individuals. Sun damage and age spots can be caused by many different factors, including sun exposure and aging.

Sure, there are many over-the-counter products touting their skin blurring or lightening effect, but the truth is, if you want actual results, they're not going to cut it! To see a noticeable difference in your skin's appearance, you'll need to see a medical professional.

Seeing a skincare specialist doesn't mean you need surgery; it just means that your skin needs to have medical-grade treatment to have optimal cellular turnover and the regenerative required effects to improve texture, color, brightness, and the reduction in wrinkles.

SWFL Dermatology Plastic Surgery & Laser Center offers the most advanced techniques, procedures, and products. One significant advancement in the reduction of skin discoloration is an innovative laser called MedLite® C6.

MedLite® C6 uses a groundbreaking Q-switched Nd:YAG laser with a unique pulse dispersion to penetrate the discoloration while leaving the surrounding tissue safe and unaffected. With Cynosure's innovative laser treatments, you can be rid of unwanted spots and back to flawless, beautiful skin.

How it works

MedLite® C6 penetrates the skin in nanoseconds using high-speed energy waves. This helps to keep the skin cool and not overheated like traditional photo light lasers. This inventive laser technology targets sun damage and brown spots through electro-optic energy, which causes dark areas to gradually disappear through your body's natural healing process, revealing clearer, more beautiful-looking skin.

What can be treated with MedLite® C6?

MedLite® C6's laser light treatment is suitable for treating age spots, sun damage, and freckles on the face, neck, chest, arms, hands, legs, and feet.

How many treatments do I need?

Typically, only a few treatments are needed; however, depending on the condition, several treatments may be required to achieve desired results.

Immediately following the treatment, some people could experience a mild, sunburn-like sensation, possibly accompanied by some minor swelling. This usually lasts 2 to 24 hours. Work with your provider to discuss other possible side effects and the necessary post-treatment care.

Benefits of MedLite® C6

- Reduces and alleviates dark spots (even tattoos)
- Reduces acne, scarring and wrinkles
- Zero to minimal downtime
- Minimal discomfort
- Resume normal activities immediately
- Remarkable long-lasting results
- Glowing, clear skin

MedLite® C6 is trusted by practitioners worldwide for its safety and consistent results.

SWFL Dermatology Plastic Surgery & Laser Center is a full-service General and Surgical Dermatology practice and a leader in Non-Invasive Anti-Aging & Beauty Enhancement Cosmetic Services.

Services & Treatments Provided:

- General Dermatology
- Skin Cancer
- Mohs Surgery
- Botox
- Dermal Fillers
- Virtual Office Visits
- Cosmetic Dermatology
- Medical Grade Skincare & Product

The staff at SWFL Dermatology Plastic Surgery & Laser Center is dedicated to providing the most personalized care by treating their patients like family. Each provider is committed to taking the time to understand the concerns and goals of the patient in order to provide the best-individualized care for that patient.

The expert and dedicated team offers specialized and individualized treatment options for skin conditions such as acne, alopecia, contact dermatitis, eczema, rosacea, shingles, sunburn, and urticaria.

SWFL Dermatology is an extension of All Island Dermatology Plastic Surgery, MedSpa and Laser Center which has serviced patients in the greater Garden City and Glen Cove communities in Long Island, New York since 1995.

The office is conveniently located at 13800 Tamiami Trail N, Naples, Florida, and serves the greater Collier and Lee County areas.

What's on YOUR Skin?

Contact SWFL Dermatology Plastic Surgery & Laser Center. Accepting most Florida & New York Insurance Plans including Florida Blue and GHI.

To improve the appearance and health of your skin, schedule a consultation today at SWFL Dermatology Plastic Surgery & Laser Center online or by phone at **239-500-SKIN**.



Founder & Owner

Joseph Onorato, MD, FAAD

Dr. Onorato has over 25 years of experience practicing dermatology and is board certified. He serves as SWFL Dermatology's medical director, encouraging his team to provide the best skin care services in the area. He focuses on general dermatology and dermatological surgery including laser treatments, chemical peels, and injectable fillers.

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ALZHEIMER'S TREATMENTS

By Dr. Doreen DeStefano, NHD, APRN, DNP

Alzheimer's disease is a neurologic disorder that causes the brain to shrink and brain cells to die. The National Institute on Aging (NIA) defines it as a brain disorder that slowly destroys memory and thinking skills and, eventually, the ability to carry out the simplest tasks.

Alzheimer's is the most common form of dementia, a term used for memory loss and loss of cognitive skills. Between 60 and 80 percent of dementia cases are caused by this disease. Dementia symptoms become worse over time as Alzheimer's disease progresses in a patient. In the beginning, memory loss is minimal, but over time, a patient will reach the final stage in which he will no longer be able to interact with his environment. Patients generally live 6-8 years after symptoms first appear, but some live much longer.

It is estimated that somewhere around 6 million Americans over the age of 65 suffer from Alzheimer's. As our population grows older, the number of those suffering from the disease will increase significantly unless progress is made toward prevention and improved treatment. There is no cure at this time, but progress is being made. Medications do not stop the progression of the disease, but do, at least to some degree, slow down the symptoms and help to improve the quality of life of patients with Alzheimer's.

THE LATEST TREATMENTS

Stem Cell Therapy

According to the National Library of Medicine's website, stem cell therapy is making strides in the treatment of Alzheimer's disease (AD) where previous treatments have not been successful. "To date, almost all advanced clinical trials on specific AD-related pathways have failed mostly due to a large number of neurons lost in the brain of patients with AD. Also, currently available drug candidates intervene too late. Stem cells have improved characteristics of self-renewal, proliferation, differentiation, and recombination with the advent of stem cell technology and the transformation of these cells into different types of central nervous system neurons and glial cells. Stem cell treatment has been successful in AD animal models. Recent preclinical studies on stem cell therapy for AD have proved to be promising. Cell replacement therapies, such as



human embryonic stem cells or induced pluripotent stem cell-derived neural cells, have the potential to treat patients with AD, and human clinical trials are ongoing in this regard. However, many steps still need to be taken before stem cell therapy becomes a clinically feasible treatment for human AD and related diseases. This paper reviews the pathophysiology of AD and the application prospects of related stem cells based on cell type."¹

Light Therapy

Light therapy is the controlled adjustment of your circadian rhythm using light stimulation.

Your circadian rhythm, also known as your body's internal 24-hour clock, controls your sleep-wake cycle by responding to how light around you changes. On the cellular level, it allows cells to recognize what time of day it is so they can perform specific functions. Light therapy uses artificial light to help reset your internal clock when things are awry.

It may seem unusual to use a circadian rhythm-focused therapy on a neurodegenerative condition, but sleep-wake dysfunction is a prominent part of life with Alzheimer's.

Research indicates sleep disorders occur early in the course of Alzheimer's and worsen as it progresses. Daytime napping and sleep-wake cycle shifts are common.²

Methylene Blue

According to experts at the University of Texas Health Science Center, an oral dosage of Methylene Blue can improve the reaction of brain areas that govern concentration and short-term memory.

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Major cytopathology in the patients' brains includes the failure of mitochondria and energy rate, which are presumably caused by the buildup of harmful amyloid-beta peptides. Methylene Blue boosts heme production and mitochondrial respiration, which is deficient in Alzheimer's disease brains.

Methylene Blue has repeatedly been shown to be one of the most effective treatments for delaying maturity in human cells. One of Methylene Blue's primary actions seems to be to improve mitochondrial activity.

Usually, Methylene Blue is utilized in its original form as methylthioninium chloride; however, clinical testing in Alzheimer's used both forms- reduced and oxidized Methylene Blue.

Oxidative stress is reduced in the accumulation of Alzheimer's-like tau and -amyloid. Methylene blue decreases mitochondrial oxidant generation and free radical creation in vitro. It can also alter mitochondrial respiration downstream activities such as lipid oxidation, ATP synthesis, and ECM formation, contributing to improved neuronal oxidative metabolic capacity. Methylene blue may easily transition between oxidized and reduced states, acting as an electron carrier in the electron transport chain of the mitochondrial matrix. Additionally, methylene blue therapy increases cellular Oxygen consumption, ATP generation, and glucose absorption.³

While no absolute cure has been discovered for Alzheimer's disease, these and other treatments can help a patient live a longer and fuller life. Symptoms can be less dramatic and patients and their families can decrease the gravity of the disease.

Contact Root Causes to find out more about these and other Alzheimer's treatments.



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EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT MEDICAL MARIJUANA, HEADACHES, & MIGRAINES

Headaches and migraines are some of the most prevalent threats to public health in the United States.

From an increased risk of heart disease to constant pain, headaches and migraines are serious neurological issues. However, studies point toward medical marijuana as a turning point in the fight against headaches and migraines.

Below, we'll discuss how medical marijuana can be used against migraines and headaches.

Why Headaches and Migraines are a Public Health Issue

According to self-reported data, nearly 1 in 6 Americans experience chronic headaches and migraines.

Furthermore, women are more at risk for migraines compared to men.

Headaches are extremely burdensome, but migraines are a significant health problem. Overall, migraines may lead to:

- Nausea
- Vomiting
- Insomnia
- Depression
- Irritability

Aside from these immediate risks, chronic headaches and migraines may lead to serious health concerns, such as:

- Heart disease
- Heart attack
- Stroke

Ultimately, recurring headaches and migraines require professional care. From a public health standpoint, migraines lead to an outsized risk, increasing pressure on medical resources.

Specifically, migraines indirectly cost the United States an estimated \$19 billion annually. From hospital bills to work-related absenteeism, migraines diminish the United State's workforce at an extreme rate.

How Medical Marijuana Assists Individuals With Headaches and Migraines

As it stands, current medical treatments poorly manage headaches and migraines.

Additionally, traditional migraine and headache prescriptions are flushed with adverse side effects. Traditional migraine and headache medicine produces their own problems, from dizziness to an upset stomach.

Luckily, medical marijuana for migraines and headaches has been extensively researched. Below, we'll discuss how medical marijuana assists individuals experiencing chronic headaches and migraines.

Decreased Glutamate Levels

When it comes to persistent headaches and migraines, glutamate levels play a significant role.

Specifically, increased glutamate levels trigger migraines or instances of aura. According to various studies, glutamate levels decrease when individuals consume medical marijuana.

By removing a common trigger, individuals who suffer from repetitive headaches and migraines may benefit from consuming medical marijuana, such as flowers, edibles, and concentrates.

Reduced Neurogenic Inflammation

Medical marijuana is a classic substance to decrease inflammation.

As migraines strike, receptors within the brain surge unopposed. Thus, neurogenic inflammation produces the electric pain sensation that individuals experience while undergoing a migraine.

Medical marijuana stimulates a response and opposes these receptor-based cascades. Ultimately, neurogenic inflammation is reduced, making migraines far less painful.

Serotonin Production

Medical marijuana is known to mimic the 5-HT1A receptors to produce serotonin.

In this case, serotonin reduces neurological pain while reducing stress. Overall, serotonin modulates pain, making bouts with migraine a much less painful experience.

Pain Reduction

One of the most important receptors in the body in regard to pain management is TRPV1.

The TRPV1 receptor is activated by cannabinoids, such as CBD, within medical marijuana. By harnessing medical marijuana rich in CBD, MMJ patients may significantly reduce the pain experienced during the onset of a migraine.

Additionally, TRPV1 receptors may inhibit various receptors associated with headache and migraine-induced pain. Thus, TRPV1 receptors play a crucial role in inhibiting the mechanism for headaches and migraines to occur.

The Best Medical Marijuana Products for Headaches and Migraines

If you're ready to reduce migraine and headache pain, it may be a good time to apply for a medical marijuana card.

Once a medical marijuana doctor has approved you, you're clear to purchase a wide range of MMJ products. However, some products may work better than others when combating a migraine's sudden and aggressive effects.

Medical Marijuana Vape Cartridges

When you need instant and potent effects, it's hard to beat vape cartridges loaded with high-quality medical marijuana concentrate.

Vape cartridges can reach deliver high percentages of THC — making them incredibly potent. A single puff from a vape cart can produce much-needed effects in the event of a sudden instance of headache or migraine.

Furthermore, vape carts are portable and easy to use when it matters most.

Medical Marijuana Tinctures

If you prefer not to smoke or vape — MMJ tinctures may be your best option.

Tinctures are consumed sublingually and are incredibly easy to use. However, tinctures may take upwards of 45-minutes to take effect.

Smoking or vaping medical marijuana may be the ideal method if you require rapid effects. Ultimately, consumers must experience various medical marijuana products to find out which works best when experiencing a headache or migraine.

When Should You Consume Medical Marijuana During a Migraine or Headache?

If you're experiencing a migraine or headache — you should act quickly.

Migraines typically intensify over time when left untreated, making them incredibly painful. Headaches may turn into migraines, so it's crucial to take the necessary steps to stop the pain in its tracks.

Overall, studies show a significant reduction in migraine and headache intensity when marijuana is consumed shortly after the onset. When caught soon enough, the migraine intensity may diminish considerably.

With this in mind, it's best to use a fast-acting medical marijuana product, such as flowers or vape cartridges or a THC nasal rescue spray.



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Soaking Up the Sun and Wellness: Thriving in Southwest Florida

By Dr. Danielle Zappile

It's no secret that Southwest Florida, the sun-kissed paradise, is a fantastic place to live. With its clear blue skies, white sandy beaches, and lush landscapes, it's like having a perpetual vacation. But living here is not just about savoring the scenery. It's also an opportunity to channel the power of wellness, taking a page from our body's remarkable self-healing playbook.

Now, if you're wondering how to go about it, imagine your body as a fancy, high-performance car. It's sleek, it's efficient, but it needs the right care to keep running smoothly. Just like that car, you need to ensure your body gets premium fuel (that's your diet), stays well-lubricated (hydration), gets regular tune-ups (hello, chiropractic care), and even learns a thing or two from our feline and canine friends (cue stretching).

The Secret Sauce: Hydration

Life in sunny Southwest Florida can feel like a permanent summer, making hydration a high-priority task. Think of water as the secret sauce for your body's wellness, facilitating nutrient transport and temperature regulation. And no, we're not just talking about chugging down eight glasses of water a day. Embrace hydration-rich fruits and veggies. Next time you reach for a snack, why not grab a watermelon slice or a juicy Florida orange? It's hydration with a flavor bonus!

Premium Fuel: Nutrition

When it comes to fueling your body, quality is paramount. Your diet can either support or sabotage your body's healing processes. Fresh fruits, vibrant veggies, lean proteins, and heart-healthy fats are

your VIPs here. They're the power-packed sources of antioxidants, protein for tissue repair, and slow-burning carbs for energy. Trust me, your body will thank you!

Stretch Like a Pro: Pets Know Best

Ever noticed how your pet dog or cat stretches luxuriously after a nap? It's instinctual and for good reason! Stretching enhances flexibility, promotes blood flow, and feels fantastic. Whether you're a fan of yoga, Pilates, or do some light stretching before you roll out of bed, make it a part of your daily routine. And don't worry, we're not expecting you to rival a yoga guru or a circus acrobat!

Sunshine, Meet Sun Safety

Living in Florida comes with its generous share of sunshine. It's perfect for soaking up that vitamin D, but it's crucial to balance this with sun safety. So, remember to gear up with sunblock, stylish wide-brimmed hats, and UV-protective clothing before you hit the beach. After all, we love the sun, but getting "crispy" isn't quite the wellness strategy we're aiming for!

Regular Tune-ups: Chiropractic Care

For our body's version of a tune-up, let's hear it for chiropractic care. Regular chiropractic adjustments can align the spine, enhance nerve function, and amp up your immune system. And who knows, it might just add that extra zing to your pickleball game or golf swing!

The Power of People: Community Connections

Last but not least, remember that our surroundings impact our wellness journey. Living in a thriving

community like Southwest Florida provides ample opportunities to foster social connections, which, believe it or not, can add years to your life and life to your years!

Remember, while Southwest Florida offers a beautiful backdrop, the power to live a healthier, happier life is within you. It's all about making mindful choices – whether that's reaching for a glass of water instead of a soda, incorporating more fresh fruits and veggies into your meals, or taking time to stretch and move your body each day. Wellness isn't a destination but a journey that you navigate each day with the choices you make.

By embracing these habits, you'll be setting the stage for your body to function at its best, no matter what life in Southwest Florida throws your way. After all, living in paradise should feel like paradise, right? So, let's make the most of this sun-kissed wellness journey!

So, here's to soaking up that beautiful Florida sun, connecting with the vibrant community, and embracing the power of your body's natural healing abilities. And remember, if your wellness journey ever feels like a rough game of pickleball, the Straight To Health Center team are just a phone call away. Call 239-202-0999 today, because the path to optimal health is best walked with expert guidance.



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So, as you bask in the Florida sunshine, remember to adopt a lifestyle that supports your body's inherent healing abilities. And if you're looking for a partner on this journey, Dr. Danielle Zappile at Straight To Health Center, with her expertise in cutting-edge therapies and unrivaled commitment to holistic health, is a fantastic resource. Renowned for her skill in chiropractic medicine, Dr. Zappile will guide you on your wellness journey, offering customized care that fits seamlessly into your sun-soaked Southwest Florida lifestyle. Whether its structural health, neuropathy or radiculopathy, we are here to help get you better!



Dr. Danielle Zappile has been a chiropractic physician since 2009 and has helped thousands of patients achieve their health goals.

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Lasene represents an innovative advancement in Therapeutic Light Treatments, merging cutting-edge technology with proprietary treatment protocols to address chronic pain and enhance the quality of life for individuals suffering from Parkinson's disease, sleep disorders, executive function decline, and other neurological degenerative conditions.

Through extensive research and development, Lasene has become an integral part of a series of evidence-based protocols focused on pain management and neurological restoration. These protocols aim to provide safe, affordable, and effective care to those seeking relief.

As the creators of Lasene, our primary objective is to integrate the finest technologies and treatment strategies to alleviate the challenges faced by individuals with neurodegenerative and neuromusculoskeletal disorders. Our goal is to empower our patients, enabling them to regain an active and productive lifestyle.

What Does Lasene Do?

Loss of normal nerve function can arise from various factors such as trauma, malnutrition, vascular compromise, aging, toxicity, diseases, and, to a lesser extent, genetics. These compromises in neurological function can affect different areas of the nervous system, including peripheral, spinal, and cranial neurology.

LASENE Programs offer a powerful solution for addressing neural deficits associated with specific

conditions such as Parkinson's disease, traumatic brain injury (TBI), and sleep dysfunction. These programs target not only the conditions themselves but also the symptoms related to them, such as chronic pain, tremors, digestion issues, balance problems, gait abnormalities, mood disturbances, anxiety, memory impairments, and more.

The implementation of LASENE Programs has the potential to reduce long-term suffering by improving quality-of-life metrics for individuals with compromised neurology. This approach offers significant benefits without the side effects, adverse events, contraindications, or modifications to traditional treatment methods.

The utilization of LASENE Programs opens up expanded treatment capabilities and new opportunities to help patients with neurological conditions. These programs can be integrated into a healthcare practice, allowing staff members to deliver care while doctors oversee the treatment of other patients. The ease of integration and compatibility with current practices and staff, including comprehensive training, makes it a convenient option.

Our LASENE Programs support both the clinical and business aspects of addressing patients' neurological needs. They facilitate an efficient workflow, provide necessary equipment, offer training, enable the creation of individualized and dynamic patient treatment plans, ensure HIPAA compliance in patient processing and records, and encompass other essential aspects required for successful treatment.

Brand Partnership Benefits

The brand partnership opportunity for Lasene offers numerous benefits that set it apart from other options in the market. It provides advanced solutions that are not available anywhere else, delivering life-changing results to patients. The brand partnership package includes a turnkey solution with all the necessary equipment, systems, and training, ensuring a smooth implementation process. Brand partnership can expect a fast and significant return on investment (ROI) due to the high demand for the unique Lasene treatments. Furthermore, there is a vast untapped market share, allowing the brand partners to leverage their current patient base and attract new clients easily. The high patient referral rate further contributes to the potential for success and growth. Additionally, the brand partnership is easily expandable, allowing partners to scale their operations as desired.

The Lasene Proprietary System is a comprehensive management tool that guides the patient's journey from intake to treatment completion. Implementing this system is straightforward and efficient. It dynamically generates individual treatment maps and progress graphs, ensuring personalized care for each patient. The treatment sessions are delivered by trained staff members, optimizing the efficient use of staff and clinicians' time. This approach also simplifies the delivery of treatment for the providers themselves. Importantly, all patients purchase and commit to full treatment programs, eliminating the need for billing, insurance, or collections processes.

Lasene stands out from the competition for several reasons. It has a strong foundation in data-driven patient outcomes, with predictability, dependability, and reproducibility rates of 95%. This reliability instills confidence in both franchisees and patients. Moreover, Lasene has broader applications beyond traditional healthcare approaches, offering noninvasive and non-pharmaceutical solutions. This positions Lasene as a low-risk option for patients seeking alternative treatment methods, further enhancing its appeal and market potential.

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The Relationship Between COVID-19 And Hair Loss

By Dr. Melissa (Mel) Irvine, DNP - Clinical Sexologist
Specializes in Sexual Medicine and Beauty

C OVID-19 sent out shockwaves through all aspects of society, many of which we still feel today. We all remember the toilet paper shortages and the social distancing requirements, but less known are the long-term effects that can come from those who had this virus, some of which we're still trying to understand.

Among these conversations about COVID-19's lasting impact is an increasing number of reports of hair loss, which many people notice only after they have had the virus. By logical reasoning, the question then arises of whether COVID-19 can cause hair loss and how to reverse it in the case that it does.

Hair Loss from COVID-19

COVID-19 is a virus most notably known for its effects on the respiratory system, where it likes to invade the lungs and interfere with breathing. This begs the question, though, of how this virus that prefers the lungs can result in hair loss. However, this hair loss might not be as central to COVID-19 as we expect.

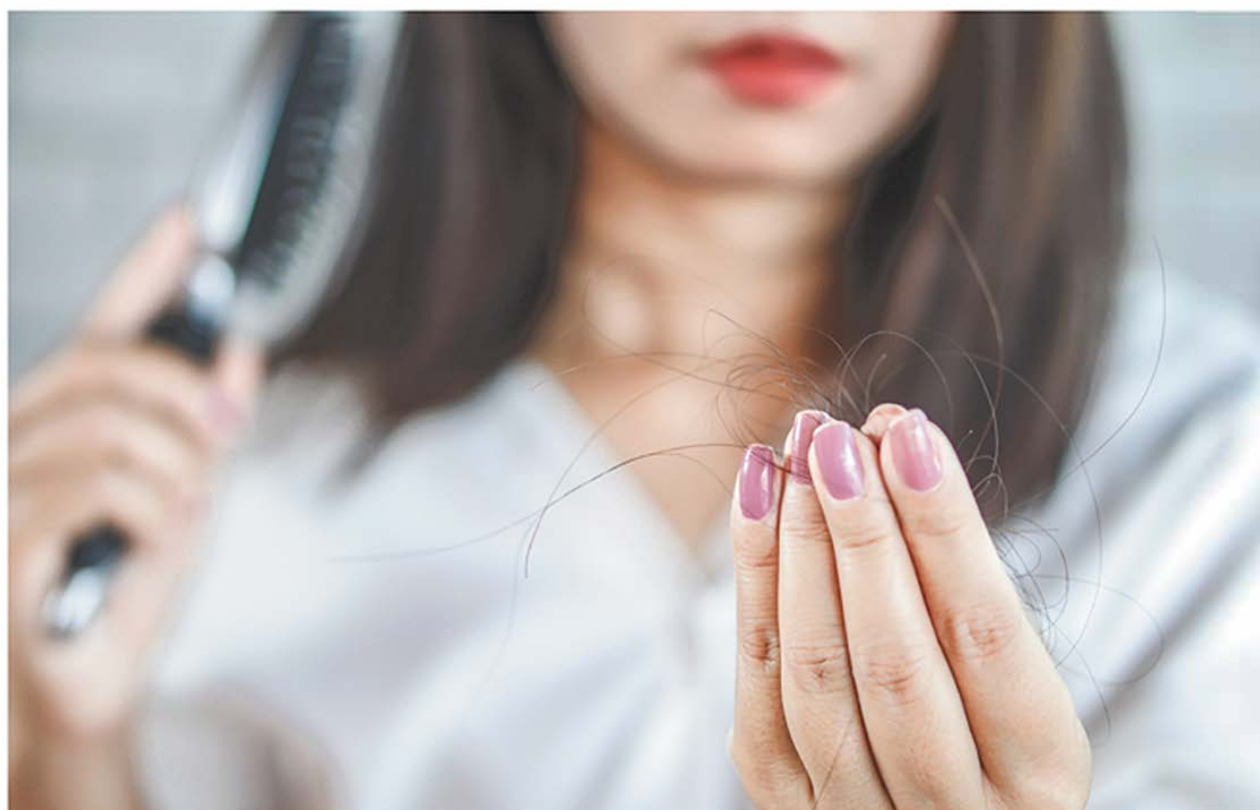
Hair loss is normal after having any high fever or illness, and fever is a common symptom in those who have COVID-19 because of the body's desire to attack and rid itself of this outside contagion. So, hair loss has less to do with COVID-19 itself, and more to do with it being a virus that causes illness and fever in the body.

Furthermore, while many people may consider it hair loss, it's actually hair shedding, with the medical name of telogen effluvium. Still, the term hair loss is commonly used to depict the scenario.

A 2022 study into telogen effluvium found that of the 198 patients included in the study, 48 showed hair loss after having COVID-19, making it a prominent comorbidity, or lasting health complication, for those who had this virus.

Telogen effluvium (TE) is one of the most popular types of alopecia in women and can be provoked by:

- trauma
- stressful events
- hormonal imbalance
- malnutrition
- drugs



This condition occurs when more hairs than usual enter the shedding, or telogen, phase of the hair growth lifecycle at the same time.

So, while COVID-19 is not the only cause of TE, as a viral infection it is a possible culprit.

Why Does COVID-19 Trigger Hair Loss?

It can be a distressing situation to have undergone COVID-19 infection, something with aftereffects that are still largely unknown, only to begin experiencing hair loss. Furthermore, since hair shedding due to COVID does not occur immediately following infection, it can often be hard to narrow down if the cause is COVID, genetics, or something else entirely.

There are a few reasons why COVID-19 may cause hair loss, and they all primarily stem from stress. As for the type of stress, it can be physical stress on the body, or mental stress of the mind.

For physical stressors, those with COVID-19 often have a high fever, which is often associated with hair shedding following infection. While this stressor is mild, more serious physical stressors can also lead to

hair loss, such as being placed on a ventilator because of respiratory complications. Both of these complications place the body under physical stress, which may trigger TE.

COVID-19 also increases mental stress as you deal with the infection and how you feel because of it.

When you look at it this way, it is clear that COVID-19 infection can place tremendous stress on the body through various means, which is resulting in more cases of TE following infection.

Still, the severity of hair loss does not always relate to how severe the illness was. For instance, some people with severe COVID symptoms may not have any hair loss, while those with mild symptoms experience severe hair loss.

How Long Can It Last?

If you suffer from hair shedding due to COVID-19, or any other illness, it becomes most noticeable about two to three months after having the fever or infection. As for how long it lasts, it may take six to nine months before shedding stops and your hair begins to look normal again. However, some

studies on COVID-19-related hair shedding have seen that it stops sooner than this, sometimes in only two to three months instead of the six-month average.

Is COVID-19 Hair Loss Permanent?

The good news about TE from COVID-19 is that it is not permanent. The hair phase shifts to telogen more quickly than it should, but once the new strand begins growing in, the hair can return to normal.

This is because TE does not cause someone to lose their hair follicles, which is what occurs in the case of hair loss. While there might be a bit of time when the hair does not grow, since the hair follicle is still there, the hair will eventually regrow.

Still, as with most things, there is an exception. In less than 10% of cases, those experiencing hair shedding may suffer from chronic TE, which is when the hair shedding persists beyond six months. While the exact cause of chronic TE is unknown, in cases linked to COVID-19, it's suspected to be from the significant amount of stress you underwent while infected and the fact that you might not yet be back to normal even after six months. Even in this case, though, TE is not permanent, only longer lasting.

Reversing COVID-19-Related Hair Loss

If you are experiencing hair shedding due to TE, you do not have to worry about losing all of your hair, as the proportion of telogen hairs never exceeds 50%. Still, this is something that you likely want to avoid.

So, what can be done if you are suffering from hair loss? The following are some great steps:

Check For Other Causes of Hair Loss

Since TE is delayed from your COVID-19 infection, it can be hard to know if your hair loss is from COVID or something else. To be sure, you can check other possible causes of hair loss.

Nutritional deficiencies are one such possibility. Hair relies on a balanced amount of nutrients, and in some cases, your hair loss might be because you're suffering from a deficiency in one type.

A blood test can be used to check for any nutritional deficiencies that might be affecting your hair growth. Furthermore, focusing on a more well-rounded and healthy diet can increase your chances of getting all the nutrients your body needs from the food you eat.

Your hormones might also be the culprit, with thyroids that are unbalanced possibly being the cause of your hair loss. A laboratory test can check your thyroid hormones, and if they are unbalanced, medication can be prescribed to address the low or high levels.

Check Your Stress

If tests for nutrient deficiencies and unbalanced hormones show no problems in these areas, and TE is determined to be the cause of your hair shedding, the only thing that you can really do is wait it out.

However, it's easier said than done to give your hair months to hopefully regrow, but one very important thing that you can do in this time is focus on your stress levels and keep them as minimal as possible.

TE most often results from stress, whether the stress of your environment or stress placed on your body from the illness. To ensure that TE runs its course and does not stick around longer than you want, you want to ensure that your stress levels do not remain high.

If you experience stress in your life, whether from your work, home life, or even thoughts of your hair loss, you want to work hard to address these concerns to lower your stress. Finding a healthy way to work through your worries, such as meditation, exercise, or counseling, can also be influential.

As for stress due to illness, this involves providing your body with all it needs to properly care for itself and recover from illness. For instance, your body may require more sleep as it heals or a more balanced diet rich in vitamins and nutrients it can use to repair and damage.

Stress can keep TE around longer, so by actively working to reduce stress in all forms, you can increase the odds of your hair finally beginning the regrowth cycle.

Medication

Medication is not always the right choice, but sometimes it can be.

For those with acute TE, hair growth will recover spontaneously, and their hair will begin growing again. Because of this, and since it can be hard to know when to stop medication once it has been started, it's not often recommended for those with acute TE. However, once you have been experiencing hair shedding for four to six months, and it does not appear to be getting better, it might be time to look into medication.

Remember: It's Not Permanent

In most cases, hair shedding results because of stress. While it is usually from stress sustained by the body due to illness, any stress you experience from the current state of the world can also influence your hair's growth phase.

However, it's also common for hair shedding to then cause increasing stress, perpetuating the problem.

In these cases, it's important to remember that any hair loss due to TE is not permanent, and your hair will recover. Even chronic cases of TE, which last longer than 6 months, are still not cases of permanent hair loss. Once the body returns to balance, hair will begin regrowing again.

So, the best thing you can do to reverse hair loss is to remain calm, both in your mindset about any hair you have lost and in all other aspects of your life.

COVID-19 Hair Loss: Key Takeaways

Because of the increasing amount of physical and mental stress COVID-19 infection places on the body, more and more people are suffering from hair loss months after their infection.

Unfortunately, there's not much that can be done to reverse hair loss from COVID-19 beyond waiting for everything to sort itself out. If you find yourself at this point, remember that your hair will grow back, and this is only a temporary process.

Still, while COVID-19 can cause hair shedding, it may not be the cause of your hair loss, which is why it is best to reach out to a doctor to look into your health profile to determine if something else is to blame for your hair loss.

Remember, while hair is often considered only for its influence on physical appearance, it can provide a lot of information about your internal health. If your hair is shedding more than before, it may be wise to listen to your body and look into why this is happening with your doctor.

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Remediation Complete... What Next?

By Julie S. Hurst- Nicoll, MBA, CMI, CMR - President, American Mold Experts

I often see clients complete their remediation process and render a sigh of relief after their clearance comes back clean. I understand the thought "glad that is over", but the reality is this is where the homeowner due diligence begins!

Yes your home is now mold safe but the key is understanding all the issues that can affect your home in the future and safeguarding your future. From the moment we complete the work recontamination can begin. Mold is everywhere. Have you considered all the issues that could potentially affect your living space:

1. Finding a great deal on a garage sale furniture or even new furniture that has been sitting in a warehouse that might not be climate controlled could easily transfer mold spores into your home.
2. Have you considered your auto is making you sick? Cars can get moisture in from rain and snow and create humidity to grow mold. Same for boats, campers and RV's.
3. Have you considered your work environment may have mold in building or HVAC. Monitor humidity; look for roof leaks, stained drop down ceiling tiles or condensation moisture, dark stains on return air grates.
4. Has your vacuum been cleaned? Does your cleaning lady bring in her own vacuum or pole duster transferring spores from the previous home they cleaned?
5. What are you doing to eliminate dust? Mold feeds on dust.
6. Remember every time you enter your home from outside mold spores can remain on your clothes and enter your home. True for your pets too, bringing in mold spores.
7. Those that live in wooded areas will naturally have more mold spores around their home.
8. Those that love to nourish your landscape with wood mulch are actually providing more mold spores



around the exterior of their home that can easily enter through entering a door. Be especially diligent when new mulch gets laid before it settles.

9. Condensation. Whether on windows, ductwork or plumbing pipes this added moisture can raise your humidity levels and provide the needed nutrition for mold to multiply.

10. Help your furnace help you. Be sure you are using at least a MERV 8 filter and change regularly. And when you change out be sure and put the old one in a sealed plastic bag before walking through your home to dispose of in your trash.

11. For as little as \$10 you can purchase humidity meters to place throughout your home or office. Make sure the humidity stays below 60% at all times! Some common species of mold can grow and thrive just on high humidity.

12. Basements are notorious for humidity and even the best maintained finished basement can have leaks or sump pump failures. Keep on guard with humidity meters, have back up alarms on sump pumps and monitor humidity.

13. Monitor the humidity coming from your HVAC vents. If your air conditioning short cycles it may cool but not run long enough to remove the humidity. This can be due to your unit being oversized for the home or a fan speed issue. Another HVAC issue is keeping your home too warm when your AC is on. If your unit does not run often to dehumidify then high humidity will cause the most

common mold species, that looks like dust to grow unnoticed. If you are one of those that were told to keep your fan on continuously versus auto is another problem we often see causing high humidity. When your system is on and the humidity it extracts from the air condensates in the unit. If when the system is off but the fan is still running the air blows over these wet coils putting humidity back into your home.

14. Make sure you keep your crawl space vapor barrier in good shape and contractors that might be in there like a plumber does not move it about providing for uncovered areas that can allow earth humidity to rise and increase the humidity within your home.

15. Check your downspouts to be sure they extend from your structure and don't dislodge during mowing or storms.

16. Always be on the look out for excess moisture:

- Disconnected dryer vents
- Icemaker line leaks
- Plumbing leaks
- Roof or chimney leaks
- Windows excess condensation
- Toilet seal leaks
- Tub/shower leaks or escaping water during a bath or shower
- Dishwasher or clothes washer leaks
- Wet towels, swimsuits, athletic clothes

Once you have been affected by mold or the mycotoxins they produce there is a new realization that you must now be more conscious with humidity and water leaks. This list certainly is not exhaustive but can provide a checklist to review. If you have any questions, please contact us.



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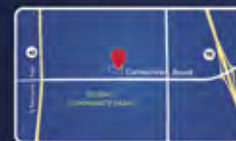
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RN 2.0



SCAN ME

By Nashat Abualhaija, Ph.D., RN

"As a nurse, we have the opportunity to heal the heart, mind, soul, and body of our patients, their families, and ourselves. They may not remember your name, but they will never forget the way you made them feel." – Maya Angelou

Interestingly, Maya Angelou was never a nurse, yet she had a deep understanding of what it takes to be one.

The need for nurses to provide compassionate care is part of the equation. With all the advancements in treatments, nurses need to have a deeper knowledge of their craft in order to provide their patients with holistic and complex care.

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- A path to graduate nursing degrees

Additionally, state and regulatory agencies, including the Veterans Administration, have mandates for BSN-prepared nurses. Many healthcare facilities now require RNs to have a BSN for entry level nursing positions. As the population ages, the need for nurses with a BSN grows. Studies show that nurses with a BSN can provide a higher level of care because they have a higher level of competency in the nursing practice, increased skills in communication, leadership, professional integration, plus research and evaluation. In all, that leads to better patient outcomes.*

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Dr. Nashat Abualhaija, Ph.D., RN, is the nursing program director at Hodges University.

*The American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN) "The Impact of Education on Nursing Practice (AACN, 2014)



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KIDNEY CANCER: Are You at Risk?

By Neetu Malhotra, MD

The kidneys are a major part of our detoxifying system. These two small bean-shaped organs clean the blood and filter waste products and toxins from the body through the urine. Kidney cancer is one of the ten most prevalent cancers. The lifetime risk for developing kidney cancer is about 1 in 46 in men and 1 in 82 in women.¹

The symptoms of kidney cancer often go unnoticed or don't begin to show until the tumor(s) has grown. However, some of the key indicators are as follows:

- Blood in the urine
- Fatigue
- Loss of appetite
- Weight loss
- Fever or infection
- Swollen abdomen
- Lump on the side of the abdomen (with or without pain)
- Anemia
- Swollen legs and ankles
- Chronic inflammation
- High blood pressure
- Shortness of breath

If you have symptoms or your physician finds a lump during a physical examination, they will order diagnostic testing such as a renal arteriogram, MRI, CT Scan, blood and urine analysis, and a needle biopsy may be necessary.

There are some increased risk factors, which make some individuals more susceptible to renal cancer. The risks factors included:

- Being over the age of 40
- Being male
- Being black
- Smoking
- Obese
- Overuse of NSAIDs and other prescription medications
- Family History
- Chemical Exposures
- Kidney disease

Most kidney cancer appears first in the tubules of the kidneys. When the malignant cells form a tumor(s) the growth rate is typically slow, so the

likelihood of an early diagnosis is increased, and the treatment can usually be performed before the tumor has metastasized into any other organs.

Treatment

Depending on the stage and size of the tumor(s), your physician will develop a specific treatment plan tailored to your needs.

Typically, performing a nephrectomy treats kidney cancer. There are three main types of this surgical option. The first is a Partial nephrectomy, which removes the tumor and some of the surrounding tissue. The second is a Simple nephrectomy, which removes the entire kidney, and the third treatment method is a Radical nephrectomy, which removes the kidney, adrenal glands, lymph nodes, and any questionable surrounding tissue margins. These procedures can usually be done laparoscopically. Some patients may also require radiation or chemotherapy treatments.

Associates in Nephrology

Associates in Nephrology has been providing comprehensive kidney care and transplant services in Southwest Florida since 1984. Our team of nephrologists, nurse practitioners, and medical assistants are engaged in all aspects of providing the most advanced services for kidney disease and kidney transplants.

Chronic Kidney Disease Program

Chronic Kidney Disease (CKD) means that the kidneys have become damaged. The common causes of CKD are diabetes mellitus, hypertension, inherited diseases, and nephritis.

The purpose of the CKD program is to slow the progression of damage to the kidneys and treat associated complications such as hypertension, anemia, and bone disease. If we are unable to arrest the disease process and the kidney damage progresses to end stage renal disease (ESRD), our plan is to manage these complications while preparing patients for renal (kidney) replacement therapy. This therapy can consist of peritoneal dialysis, hemodialysis, home hemodialysis, or kidney transplantation.

Source:

1. https://www.nfcr.org/cancer-types/kidney-cancer/?gclid=CjwKCAIAYc2BBhAaEiwA44-wW9qTM7gXbIKsBU1dxNN-rM7OKwMg3J43bZni6h175MIQCzwNsKORoCE5QQAvD_BwE

Managing these complications and preparing patients for renal replacement therapy is a complex process of visits, treatment, and teaching sessions. Our medical team consists of nephrologists (kidney doctors), nurse practitioners, registered dietitians, nurses, and medical assistants.

Services Provided

Associates in Nephrology provides treatment for many kidney related conditions, as well as kidney transplant services.

- All forms of Dialysis – Hemodialysis and Peritoneal
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- Electrolyte Disorders
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- Hypertension
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- Kidney Transplant Services: Patient and Donor Evaluations, Post-Transplant Follow-up Care
- Lupus Nephritis
- Nephrotic Syndrome
- Pyelonephritis
- Polycystic Kidney Disease
- Recurring kidney stones
- Renal Failure
- Renal Insufficiency

We work collaboratively with a patient's primary care physician and specialists to slow the progression of chronic kidney disease (CKD) and prevent or manage complications such as hypertension, anemia, and bone disease. Additionally, our multidisciplinary team of professionals can assist you in arranging a wide array of supportive services and education programs for patients in all stages of CKD. For patients with end-stage renal disease (ESRD), our nephrologists can prepare them for all renal replacement therapies: in-center or home hemodialysis, peritoneal dialysis, and kidney transplant.

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HEALING BACK PAIN WITH PLATELET RICH PLASMA (PRP)

By Dr. Sebastian Klisiewicz, D.O.



What is Back Pain?

Back pain is the most common pain condition in our society. In fact, nearly 80% of adults have experienced back pain at some point in their lives. In some cases, back pain begins abruptly after a significant injury. Other times, back pain is more insidious, coming and going over the years. Back pain sufferers generally have weakness and dysfunction of the supporting muscles, ligaments and tendons. This weakness and laxity causes degeneration of the spinal discs and compression of the nerves. The result of these conditions is limited function and a significant decrease in quality of life.

Symptoms and Diagnosis

The symptoms of back pain can range from an uncomfortable ache to severe pain that is disabling. The pain can stay in the spine or it may radiate down the legs and feet (aka sciatica). This is often accompanied by weakness or numbness. Successful treatment of back pain requires a good history that identifies all the contributing factors and a thorough physical exam to locate the pain generators. Often, imaging studies such as MRI and X-rays, and nerve studies (EMGs) can be used to help make the diagnosis.

Standard Back Pain Treatments

Most people with back pain start treatment with their primary care doctor. They are generally given steroids, pain pills and muscle relaxers. Sometimes these treatments help temporarily but may have side effects like weight gain, increased blood sugar, and thinning of bones. Physical therapy is another first line treatment that often is helpful to increase core stability and improve biomechanics. Unfortunately for many, physical therapy alone may not be enough to provide long term relief.

When these first line therapies fail, doctors often recommend steroid injections. Again, these treatments can be effective at reducing back pain temporarily, but often do not provide long term relief. Over time, repeated steroid injections lose their effectiveness and can cause unwanted consequences including degeneration of the surrounding structures and muscle atrophy. This can lead to more spinal instability and degeneration.

A New Approach for Back Pain

Luckily for back pain sufferers, there is a safe and natural solution to heal the spine and provide long term pain relief. Platelet Rich Plasma (aka PRP) injections are becoming the new standard of care in treating a wide variety of musculoskeletal conditions including back pain.

PRP is created by taking a patient's own blood and spinning it in a centrifuge to concentrate platelets. Platelets are the first responders to any injury; they mobilize the immune system and initiate the healing process. When concentrated platelets are injected they become activated, stick together like glue, and release an array of natural growth factors. These growth factors signal the body's own stem cells and other specialized healing cells to come to the area of injury and start the process of healing. Some of the growth factors have other effects including decreasing pain, improving blood flow and stimulating nerve regeneration. The glue-like substance of platelets can stick around in the injected area for 1-2 weeks providing a sustained release of these growth factors meaning the healing continues for weeks after the injections.

For back pain, PRP is injected into the spinal ligaments, joints and muscles under ultrasound guidance to stimulate the healing response. This leads to a strengthening of the supporting structures, regeneration of the joints and improved spinal stability which again is usually the underlying cause leading to back pain.

Numerous clinical trials have shown that PRP injections into and around the spinal joints can provide long term relief and stimulate muscle growth. Several studies have also demonstrated that injecting the growth factors from PRP into the epidural space can decrease pain and help with neurological symptoms better than steroid epidurals. All this without the negative side effects of steroids.

Healing The Back at Integrative Rehab Medicine

At IRM, all regenerative spinal procedures are done by Dr. Sebastian, a board-certified physician with advanced training in Regenerative medicine. All of our procedures are done under ultrasound guidance ensuring that these platelets and growth factors are delivered exactly where they are needed most.

Our spinal PRP treatments are just one aspect of our Integrative Advantage™ which is the most comprehensive treatment strategy for back pain in Southwest Florida. We combine multiple modalities to provide the best results including Platelet Rich Plasma, personalized physical therapy, an anti-inflammatory diet, and acupuncture. We also use the most state of the art Energy Modalities such as low-level laser therapy and PEMF to further decrease symptoms and support the healing process.

If you are tired of back pain stopping you from living the life you want to live, be sure to schedule your consultation today to discuss how PRP can help you on your healing journey.



DR. SEBASTIAN KLISIEWICZ, D.O. Board Certified in Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation

Dr. Sebastian is a leading physiatrist in Estero, Fort Myers and Bonita Springs (Southwest Florida). He is the founder

and medical director of Integrative Rehab Medicine in Estero, FL. He combines his extensive knowledge in Regenerative Medicine, Osteopathic musculoskeletal medicine, Physical Rehabilitation and Functional & Natural medicine to create personalized and integrated treatment plans for each patient.

Dr. Sebastian completed his medical studies at the Chicago College of Osteopathic Medicine (CCOM) followed by a residency in Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation (PM&R) at the Medical College of Wisconsin in Milwaukee. After residency, he worked as an Assistant Professor for Loyola University Medical Center in Chicago. In 2014, he moved his family to Southwest Florida to work at Lee Health's Spine Center. In August 2019, Dr. Sebastian opened his private clinic, Integrative Rehab Medicine. Dr. Sebastian has extensive training in prolotherapy, PRP injections and Bone Marrow Stem Cells. During his time in Florida, he further advanced his knowledge in Integrative Medicine through course work with the Institute for Functional Medicine. Since, he has educated doctors and the public on the Integrative approach at numerous medical conferences and community events.



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Implant Dentistry CAN GIVE YOU A NEW SMILE!

By Dr. Ricardo S. Bocanegra, DDS

If you're missing teeth, implant dentistry may be the best option to get a new smile. Dental implants can improve your smile in a variety of ways, and some of them may even be surprising. Here's what you need to know.

Understanding the Basics of Implant Dentistry

Implant dentistry has existed since the 1980s, but it's really gained popularity in the last decade. Essentially, when you get a dental implant, we put a small metal post in your jaw bone. The jaw bone ossifies around the post, and then we place a crown on the post. The result is a prosthetic tooth that looks and feels just like a natural tooth.

Replacing One or More Teeth

The most noticeable way that implant dentistry helps to preserve your smile is by replacing missing teeth. You can replace one or multiple missing teeth with implant dentistry. If you just need to replace a single tooth, the process is exactly as described above. Typically, if you are missing several teeth, we will place implants in different locations in order

to distribute the pressure of the bite. The hybrid denture is when they place a bridge between the implants. There are also full dentures that can work with implant dentistry. With this option, the implants work as anchors for your dentures, and you just snap the dentures into place. This creates a more secure, natural feeling fit.

Preventing Future Decay

On an aesthetic level, implant dentistry helps to improve your smile, but implants also help your smile in other, indirect ways. When you are missing teeth, other teeth often begin to move into those areas. Your mouth has a natural tendency to fill those gaps. As that happens, your teeth come out of alignment. This can lead to issues with chewing, headaches, and even TMJ syndrome. On top of that, when your teeth rub against each other due to misalignment, that can trap food debris and lead to cavities. By choosing implant dentistry, you help to minimize some of the risk of future decay.



Preserving the Integrity of Your Jaw Bone

Implant dentistry can also help to preserve the integrity of your jaw bone. When you are missing teeth, your jaw bone starts to deteriorate. You can see this effect in many people who have lost all their teeth. Their jaw line loses its strength, and the mouth almost seems to collapse in on itself. Basically, this happens because when there aren't any teeth with roots to stimulate the jaw bone leading to the atrophy and resorption of the jaw bone. Dental implants mimic the role of the root of the teeth. They convince the jaw bone that it is still integral to the body's function. This prevents the jaw bone from deteriorating and safeguards your smile.

Dental implants are changing the way people live. With them, people are rediscovering the comfort and confidence to eat, speak, laugh and enjoy life. For more information about dental implants or to schedule a consultation appointment, call our office in Fort Myers, FL at 239-482-8806.



Ricardo S. Bocanegra, D.D.S.

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Navigating Solo Aging

ADVOCATING FOR YOURSELF AND PREPARING FOR THE FUTURE

By Cynthia Perthuis, CDP, CADDCT, CSA

As our population ages, an increasing number of older adults find themselves making decisions about their future independently, without the support of adult children or close relatives. This experience, known as solo aging, is becoming more prevalent in society. With projections indicating that one in five Americans will be retirement age by 2030, it is crucial for solo agers to understand the unique challenges they may face and take proactive steps to advocate for themselves and prepare for the future.

What is Solo Aging?

Solo agers are older adults who are navigating the aging process without immediate family support. This group includes individuals or couples without children, those who never married or had children, individuals living alone due to divorce or the death of a partner, and those whose children or relatives live far away or are not involved in their lives. Many solo agers associate living alone as they age with positive feelings such as independence, satisfaction, and happiness. However, they may also experience a sense of lacking companionship, feeling left out, and isolation compared to the general population aged 50 and above.

Challenges Faced by Solo Agers

While solo agers may have a positive outlook on their aging journey, they face unique concerns and challenges. Solo agers are more likely to fear dying alone, being moved somewhere against their will, and having someone appointed by the court to make decisions for them. Additionally, this group tends to worry about losing their independence, being alone without family or friends around, and not being able to stay in their homes.

Lack of Preparedness

One of the significant issues faced by solo agers is a lack of preparedness for the future. Only about one-third of solo agers report having someone who could assist in managing their household or handle day-to-day expenses if they were no longer able to do so. Furthermore, a considerable number of solo agers have postponed making their end-of-life wishes known. Approximately half have an advanced medical directive, and even



among those who have one, only a fraction have shared it with their primary-care doctor. Additionally, a significant percentage of solo agers have not created a will or trust, nor made arrangements for their funeral or burial. Many have done little or no planning for living assistance as they age.

Empowering Solo Agers Through Advocacy and Preparation

Solo agers must be proactive in advocating for themselves and planning for their future. Here are some steps they can take to navigate solo aging successfully:

- 1. Building a Supportive Network:** Engage with community organizations, social groups, and online communities that cater to the needs of solo agers. These connections can provide companionship, support, and assistance when needed.
- 2. Communicating End-of-Life Wishes:** Create advanced medical directives, such as a living will or health care proxy, to ensure your medical preferences are known and respected. Share these documents with your primary-care doctor and trusted individuals who may be involved in your care.

- 3. Legal and Financial Planning:** Consult with an attorney to create a comprehensive estate plan that includes a will or trust, power of attorney, and other relevant legal documents. Regularly review and update these documents to reflect any changes in circumstances.

- 4. Long-Term Care Options:** Educate yourself about various living options available for aging adults, such as assisted living, independent living communities, or home care services. Understand the costs, benefits, and eligibility criteria associated with each option.

- 5. Caregiver Support:** Consider building a network of trusted individuals, such as friends, neighbors, or professional caregivers, who can provide assistance with day-to-day tasks, manage household responsibilities, and offer emotional support.

Solo aging presents unique opportunities and challenges for older adults. By embracing independence, building supportive networks, and taking proactive steps to plan for the future, solo agers can advocate for themselves and ensure a fulfilling and secure retirement journey. It is essential to address concerns, communicate end-of-life wishes, and make informed decisions about long-term care to enjoy a life that is meaningful, connected, and prepared for the years to come.

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Unlocking the Therapeutic Benefits of Botox®



Botox, commonly known for its cosmetic applications, has proven to be an incredibly versatile treatment option. Beyond its aesthetic benefits, therapeutic Botox has gained recognition for its efficacy in alleviating migraines, treating temporomandibular joint disorder (TMJ), and managing hyperhidrosis (excessive sweating). In this article, we will explore how Botox is revolutionizing the medical field by providing relief for these debilitating conditions.

Migraine Relief

Migraines are severe headaches often accompanied by nausea, light sensitivity, and pulsating pain. For chronic migraine sufferers, therapeutic Botox injections have emerged as a game-changer. Botox works by blocking the release of certain chemicals that transmit pain signals, effectively preventing migraines before they occur. In clinical trials, patients treated with Botox experienced a significant reduction in both the frequency and intensity of migraines.

The procedure involves several small injections administered strategically around the head, neck, and shoulders. The effects of Botox typically last around three months, after which additional injections may be necessary. This non-invasive approach offers hope to individuals who have exhausted other treatment options, providing them with much-needed relief and an improved quality of life.

TMJ Treatment

Temporomandibular joint disorder (TMJ) causes pain, discomfort, and limited jaw movement. Botox injections have emerged as a viable therapeutic solution for this condition. By injecting Botox into the affected muscles, the treatment helps relax and temporarily paralyze the muscles responsible for jaw clenching and grinding. This reduces muscle tension, alleviates pain, and improves jaw functionality.

Therapeutic Botox for TMJ offers several advantages over traditional treatments such as oral splints or pain medications. It provides targeted relief, specifically addressing the muscles contributing to the disorder. Additionally, Botox injections are minimally invasive, requiring no recovery time. Patients can resume their daily activities immediately after the procedure. With regular treatment sessions, individuals with TMJ can experience a significant reduction in pain and a restoration of normal jaw movement.

Hyperhidrosis Control

Hyperhidrosis, characterized by excessive sweating, can significantly impact an individual's confidence and daily life. Therapeutic Botox has emerged as a safe and effective treatment option for this condition. By injecting Botox into

the affected areas, such as the underarms, palms, or soles of the feet, the treatment blocks the nerve signals that trigger excessive sweating.

Botox injections for hyperhidrosis provide long-lasting relief, with results typically lasting around six to nine months. Patients experience a reduction in sweat production, allowing them to regain control over their perspiration and improve their overall comfort. This treatment has proven particularly beneficial for individuals who have not responded well to other therapies or antiperspirants.

Therapeutic Botox offers a range of benefits beyond its cosmetic applications. From providing relief for migraines and managing TMJ symptoms to controlling hyperhidrosis, Botox injections have revolutionized the treatment landscape for these conditions. As this versatile treatment continues to advance, more individuals can find solace in the therapeutic benefits of Botox for a better quality of life.

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An Example of How Prescription Hope Works:

Myasthenia Gravis is a chronic autoimmune neuromuscular disorder affecting communication between nerves and muscles.

In a healthy body, nerve cells transmit signals to the muscles, which allow them to move. In MG, your immune system mistakenly produces antibodies that attack the receptors on your muscle cells. These receptors are called acetylcholine receptors, essential for transmitting nerve impulses to your muscles.

The antibodies in MG disrupt the normal functioning of acetylcholine receptors, leading to muscle weakness and fatigue. MG's most affected muscles are those that control eye and eyelid movements, facial expressions, chewing, swallowing, and speaking. However, MG can also affect muscles in other body parts, including the limbs.

The hallmark symptom of MG is muscle weakness that worsens with activity and improves with rest. This means you may experience fatigue and weakness in the affected muscles after using them for some time. For example, you may find it challenging to keep your eyes open, have difficulty chewing or swallowing, or experience slurred speech after talking for a while. Weakness can also affect your limbs, making lifting objects or climbing stairs more difficult.

It's important to note that MG symptoms can vary from person to person. Some individuals may have mild symptoms that only affect specific muscle groups, while others may experience more severe and generalized weakness.

Diagnosing MG typically involves a combination of clinical evaluation, physical examination, and specific tests. Your healthcare provider may conduct tests such as electromyography (EMG), blood tests to check for specific antibodies, and a medication called edrophonium (Tensilon) test to observe how your muscles respond.

Although there is currently no cure for MG, the condition can be effectively managed. Treatment options aim to improve muscle strength, minimize symptoms, and prevent complications. The most common approach involves medications that enhance the transmission of nerve signals to your muscles. These medications may include acetylcholinesterase inhibitors, immunosuppressants, or corticosteroids.

Cellcept® is the brand name for the medication mycophenolate mofetil, commonly used in treating Myasthenia Gravis (MG). It belongs to a class of medications called immunosuppressants.

Cellcept works by suppressing the activity of the immune system, specifically the production of certain immune cells called lymphocytes. By reducing the immune response, Cellcept helps to decrease the production of the antibodies that attack the acetylcholine receptors in MG.

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- 2. Symptom control:** Cellcept can help manage and control the symptoms of MG, including weakness in the muscles involved in eye movements, facial expressions, swallowing, and limb movements.

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THE POWER OF IV THERAPY

Preventing Headaches and Chronic Migraines Through Hydration

BY Kasey Cook, RN, Owner

Debilitating headaches and chronic migraines can significantly impact one's quality of life. While various factors contribute to their occurrence, dehydration often plays a crucial role. In recent years, the use of intravenous (IV) therapy has gained popularity as an effective method to combat headaches and migraines by replenishing the body's fluids and nutrients directly. This article explores the benefits of IV therapy in maintaining hydration levels and its potential to prevent headaches and chronic migraines.

Understanding the Link between Dehydration and Headaches

Dehydration disrupts the body's delicate balance, leading to a cascade of adverse effects, including headaches and migraines. When the body lacks adequate water, blood vessels in the brain can constrict, causing pain and discomfort. IV therapy delivers hydration directly into the bloodstream, bypassing the digestive system's absorption process. This allows for rapid rehydration, ensuring that the body receives the necessary fluids to function optimally and reducing the risk of headaches associated with dehydration.

Quick and Effective Hydration

One of the primary advantages of IV therapy is its ability to deliver fluids directly into the bloodstream. Unlike oral hydration methods, such as drinking water or sports drinks, IV therapy provides a quick and efficient way to hydrate the body.

The infusion of saline solution containing essential electrolytes ensures optimal hydration levels are reached promptly. This immediate hydration can help prevent the onset of headaches and migraines, providing relief to individuals suffering from chronic conditions.

Nutrient Replenishment for Optimal Brain Function

In addition to hydration, IV therapy can also replenish essential nutrients crucial for brain health. Certain nutrients, such as magnesium, riboflavin (vitamin B2), and coenzyme Q10, have been linked to reducing the frequency and intensity of headaches and migraines. IV therapy allows for precise administration of these nutrients, ensuring they are readily available to support optimal brain function. By addressing potential deficiencies, IV therapy can play a vital role in preventing chronic migraines and headaches associated with nutrient imbalances.

Customized Treatment for Individual Needs

IV therapy can be tailored to meet individual needs, taking into account factors such as medical history, lifestyle, and specific symptoms. This personalized approach allows healthcare professionals to design an IV treatment plan that targets the underlying causes of headaches and migraines. By addressing dehydration and nutrient imbalances unique to each patient, IV therapy can offer long-term relief and prevention of chronic conditions, reducing the reliance on medication and improving overall well-being.

Holistic Approach and Long-Term Benefits

In addition to providing immediate relief from headaches and migraines, IV therapy promotes an overall sense of well-being. Proper hydration is essential for various bodily functions, including regulating body temperature, supporting organ function, and maintaining healthy skin. By addressing hydration needs through IV therapy, individuals can experience improved energy levels, enhanced cognitive function, and increased physical performance. Moreover, preventing chronic migraines and headaches can significantly improve the overall quality of life, allowing individuals to engage fully in work, social activities, and personal relationships.

IV therapy offers a range of benefits for individuals seeking relief from headaches and chronic migraines. By providing quick and effective hydration, replenishing essential nutrients, and taking a personalized approach, IV therapy proves to be a valuable tool in preventing and managing these debilitating conditions, ultimately enhancing overall well-being.



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The Vitality of Family Health and Fitness Building Stronger Bonds and Brighter Futures

In today's fast-paced and technology-driven world, it's easy for families to neglect their health and fitness. However, prioritizing the well-being of our loved ones is crucial for building stronger bonds and securing brighter futures. Family health and fitness go hand in hand, fostering physical and mental resilience, promoting quality time together, and instilling lifelong habits. In this article, we will explore the significance of family health and fitness, highlighting its numerous benefits and providing practical tips to incorporate healthy habits into our daily lives.

Nurturing Physical Well-being

Regular physical activity is the cornerstone of a healthy lifestyle, and involving the whole family in fitness endeavors can have far-reaching advantages. Engaging in physical activities together promotes cardiovascular health, strengthens muscles and bones, and reduces the risk of chronic diseases. It also serves as an excellent opportunity for bonding and creating shared memories. Whether it's going for a hike, playing a sport, or embarking on a family bike ride, these activities not only promote physical fitness but also foster a sense of unity and teamwork among family members.

Cultivating Mental Resilience

Family health and fitness extend beyond the physical realm; they also play a vital role in nurturing mental well-being. Engaging in regular exercise releases endorphins, the "feel-good" hormones, which alleviate stress, anxiety, and depression. By prioritizing family fitness, we create a supportive

environment that encourages open communication and provides a safe space for emotional expression. Moreover, engaging in physical activities together allows family members to overcome challenges, build self-confidence, and develop a resilient mindset, traits that are invaluable in navigating life's ups and downs.

Fostering Quality Time

In the age of smartphones and busy schedules, carving out quality time with family has become more critical than ever. Prioritizing health and fitness as a family provides an avenue for shared experiences and meaningful interactions. Whether it's cooking nutritious meals together, taking family walks after dinner, or participating in fun fitness challenges, these activities promote bonding, laughter, and positive connections. By fostering an environment that values family health and fitness, we create lasting memories and strong relationships that will endure throughout the years.

Family health and fitness form the foundation for a fulfilling and prosperous life. By embracing a lifestyle that prioritizes physical and mental well-being, we foster resilience, nurture relationships, and create a solid foundation for future generations. Making small, incremental changes such as incorporating physical activities, preparing nutritious meals, and setting aside dedicated family time can yield tremendous benefits for the entire family unit. So let us join hands, embark on this journey together, and unlock the immense potential of family health and fitness, as we build stronger bonds and brighter futures for ourselves and those we hold dear.



Daniel Stanciu, MD

Dr. Stanciu is certified in Internal Medicine by the American Board of Physician Specialties as well as the American Board of Internal Medicine and has been practicing medicine since 2003. Dr. Stanciu earned his medical degree from the University of Medicine and Pharmacy in Timisoara, Romania. He completed his resident training in internal medicine at Wyckoff Heights Medical Center in Brooklyn New York.

Prior to coming to Axel Health Primary Care, Dr. Stanciu practiced as an internal medicine hospitalist. He is passionate about providing comprehensive, holistic, integrative care. By providing concierge services, Dr. Stanciu has the opportunity to spend an unlimited amount of time with each client to ensure an individualized plan of care that meets each clients' healthcare goals. He is currently working on his functional medicine certification. Dr. Stanciu enjoys educating each client regarding the best approach to health screenings, risk assessments, early treatment, and appropriate interventions. In his free time, Dr. Stanciu is athletic and enjoys multiple sports and spending time with his family.



Joel Pelissier, MD

Dr. Pelissier is certified in Internal Medicine by the American Board of Internal Medicine and has been practicing medicine since 1996. Dr. Pelissier completed his residency training at Brookdale University Hospital and Medical Center. He also had the opportunity to study abroad receiving further training in France and Spain. He has been providing medical services to the Fort Myers Community for over 10 years and is passionate about providing comprehensive, integrative care and working with patients to ensure they obtain their healthcare goals. Dr. Pelissier is also a Certified Medical Examiner for the Department of Transportation (DOT). He is passionate about medical education and is a board review question writer for the Society of Hospital Medicine. Dr. Pelissier is fluent in Haitian Creole, French, English, and Spanish. He is also conversational in Portuguese. In his free time Dr. Pelissier enjoys spending time with his daughter, his family, exercising, and reading.



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The Vital Role of Family Health and Fitness

Maintaining good health and fitness is essential for individuals of all ages, but when it comes to the well-being of a family, the importance amplifies significantly. Orthopedic specialists, experts in musculoskeletal health, understand the significant impact that family health and fitness have on overall wellness. In this article, we delve into the reasons why prioritizing family health and fitness is crucial for a happy and fulfilling life. From preventing injuries and chronic conditions to fostering strong bonds and instilling healthy habits, embracing a proactive approach to family well-being can lead to a lifetime of benefits.

Preventing Injuries and Promoting Mobility

One of the key reasons why family health and fitness are paramount is the prevention of injuries and the promotion of optimal mobility. Orthopedic specialists stress the importance of regular exercise, emphasizing that it helps strengthen muscles, improve balance, and increase flexibility. When families engage in physical activities together, they not only enhance their fitness levels but also reduce the risk of accidents and injuries. A proactive approach to physical well-being can safeguard against sprains, strains, fractures, and other musculoskeletal issues that can hinder everyday life. By prioritizing family health and fitness, parents can set a positive example for their children, fostering a culture of safety and well-being that extends throughout generations.

Building Stronger Family Bonds

Engaging in shared physical activities strengthens family bonds and creates lasting memories. Whether it's going for a hike, playing sports, or simply taking a



walk together, these shared experiences foster meaningful connections. Regular exercise releases endorphins, known as "feel-good" hormones, promoting positive emotions and reducing stress. Through family fitness, parents can actively participate in their children's lives, promoting communication, teamwork, and mutual support. The time spent together while engaging in physical activities offers an opportunity for open dialogue, encouraging discussions on health, fitness, and overall well-being. By nurturing strong family bonds through fitness, orthopedic specialists recognize the potential for improved mental health and emotional resilience within each family member.

Instilling Healthy Habits for Life

The habits we develop in childhood often shape our future health and well-being. Orthopedic specialists strongly advocate for establishing healthy habits within the family unit. By prioritizing regular exercise and proper nutrition, parents can instill lifelong habits that promote physical and mental wellness. Engaging in physical activities as a family sets a powerful example for children, encouraging them to

adopt an active lifestyle. These healthy habits can extend beyond the immediate family and influence extended family members, friends, and even the community at large. As orthopedic specialists emphasize, a focus on family health and fitness today can create a ripple effect, positively impacting generations to come.

The significance of family health and fitness cannot be overstated. From preventing injuries and promoting mobility to building stronger family bonds and instilling healthy habits, prioritizing the wellbeing of the family unit offers a multitude of benefits. Orthopedic specialists understand the vital role that family health and fitness play in fostering a happy and fulfilling life. By engaging in physical activities together and creating a supportive environment, families can reap the rewards of improved physical and mental well-being, and lay the foundation for future generations to lead healthy, active lives. Let us embark on this journey towards a healthier and happier family, one step at a time.

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In recent years, CryoTherma has emerged as a revolutionary treatment that offers a wide range of benefits, including skin tightening, fat reduction, and muscle recovery. This cutting-edge therapy combines the power of cryotherapy and thermal energy to stimulate the body's natural healing processes. By harnessing the extreme cold and heat, CryoTherma provides a safe and effective solution for those seeking to enhance their physical appearance and overall well-being. In this article, we will explore the remarkable advantages of CryoTherma and how it can transform your body.

SKIN TIGHTENING

One of the most prominent benefits of CryoTherma is its ability to tighten and rejuvenate the skin. As we age, our skin loses elasticity, leading to sagging and the formation of wrinkles. CryoTherma counters these effects by triggering a process called collagen induction. During the treatment, controlled cold temperatures are applied to the targeted areas, causing the skin tissues to contract and stimulate collagen production. Collagen, the main structural protein in our skin, helps restore its firmness and smoothness.

CryoTherma promotes cellular regeneration, resulting in improved skin tone, texture, and reduced appearance of fine lines and wrinkles. It is particularly effective in addressing problem areas such as the face, neck, abdomen, and thighs. With regular CryoTherma sessions, patients can achieve a more youthful and tightened complexion without the need for invasive procedures.

FAT REDUCTION

For those striving to achieve a leaner physique, CryoTherma offers a non-surgical alternative to fat reduction. The therapy employs a combination of cryolipolysis (fat freezing) and thermal energy to target and destroy fat cells. During the treatment, the fat cells are exposed to extremely cold temperatures, causing them to undergo apoptosis (cell death). Over time, the body naturally eliminates these damaged fat cells, resulting in a slimmer and more sculpted appearance.

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CryoTherma is particularly effective in treating stubborn pockets of fat that are resistant to diet and exercise, such as love handles, belly fat, and thigh bulges. Unlike traditional liposuction, CryoTherma is non-invasive, painless, and requires no downtime. This makes it an attractive option for individuals seeking a safe and convenient fat reduction solution.

MUSCLE RECOVERY

Athletes and fitness enthusiasts can also benefit greatly from CryoTherma's muscle recovery properties. Intense physical activity often leads to muscle soreness, inflammation, and fatigue. CryoTherma utilizes the power of cryotherapy to rapidly reduce muscle temperature, which helps alleviate pain and inflammation. Furthermore, the subsequent thermal energy application promotes blood circulation, accelerating the delivery of oxygen and nutrients to the muscles.

The combination of cold and heat in CryoTherma enhances the recovery process by reducing muscle damage, minimizing recovery time, and enhancing overall performance. Athletes can experience faster recovery between training sessions, enabling them to train harder and reach their fitness goals more efficiently.

CryoTherma presents a breakthrough in aesthetic and wellness treatments by offering numerous benefits in skin tightening, fat reduction, and muscle recovery. With its ability to stimulate collagen production, CryoTherma rejuvenates the skin, reducing signs of aging and improving overall complexion. Additionally, it provides a non-surgical alternative for fat reduction, sculpting the body without the need for invasive procedures. Lastly, CryoTherma aids in muscle recovery, helping athletes and fitness enthusiasts recover faster and perform at their peak.



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Understanding Wills in Florida

Executors, Guardianship, and Probate

By Kelly L. Fayer, P.A.

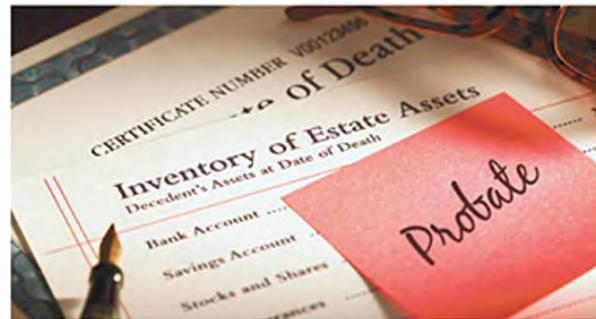
Creating a will is a vital step in ensuring that your final wishes are carried out after your passing. In Florida, like in many other states, wills play a crucial role in estate planning. However, it is important to understand the intricacies of Florida's laws regarding wills, including the selection of an executor, the inclusion of guardianship language for minor children, and the limitations of wills in avoiding probate.

Who Can Serve as PR or Executor

In Florida, the person responsible for administering the will is referred to as the personal representative (PR), while in other states, this role is commonly known as the executor. When creating a will, you have the freedom to designate an individual to act as your PR, who will be responsible for overseeing the distribution of your assets and carrying out your wishes as stated in the will. This person must be at least 18 years old; they must be a Florida resident and/or related to you by blood, marriage, or adoption; they must be both mentally and physically capable to serve; and they must not have any felony convictions on their record.

Guardianship Language for Minor Children

One significant advantage of creating a will in Florida is the ability to include guardianship language for minor children. This allows you to designate a trusted individual to assume legal guardianship of your children in the event that both parents pass away before the children reach adulthood. By specifying your preferences in your



will, you can ensure that your children are cared for by someone you trust, rather than leaving this decision up to the court.

The Limitations of Wills in Avoiding Probate

While having a will is a critical component of estate planning, it is essential to understand that it does not completely avoid probate in Florida. Probate is the legal process through which a deceased person's assets are distributed and debts are settled. Even with a will in place, the probate court is responsible for overseeing the administration process to ensure the validity of the will, resolve any disputes, and ensure proper asset distribution. Therefore, it is essential to consider other estate planning tools, such as trusts, to minimize the need for probate and simplify the transfer of assets.

Creating a will in Florida is an essential step in estate planning, allowing you to dictate the distribution of your assets and provide for your loved ones. Designating a personal representative or executor is crucial to ensure that your final wishes

are carried out faithfully. Additionally, including guardianship language for minor children provides peace of mind, knowing that your children will be cared for by someone you trust. While a will is an integral part of the estate planning process, it is important to be aware that it does not entirely avoid probate. To fully explore your options for minimizing the probate process, consulting with an experienced estate planning attorney can help you navigate the complexities of Florida's laws and ensure that your wishes are carried out efficiently and effectively.

Every adult needs a clear, enforceable plan for what will happen when they pass away or become incapacitated. Creating an estate plan protects your loved ones, assets, and legacy and gives you the peace of mind of knowing your final wishes will be honored.

At The Law Office of Kelly L. Fayer, P.A., we provide attentive, personal assistance to Florida residents who are looking to prepare for the future. Our experienced lawyer is passionate about helping our clients fully understand their options and implement tools that will accomplish their goals. No matter your circumstances, our estate planning services in Fort Myers are designed to guide you through the planning process and include assistance with a wide range of instruments, from wills and trusts, to advance directives and powers of attorney. When you need an estate planning attorney near you, contact The Law Office of Kelly L. Fayer, P.A.

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What is Osteoarthritis (OA) of the Knee?

Positioned between the three bones of the knee (the femur, tibia, and patella) the articular cartilage provides a smooth gliding surface and acts as a shock absorber. This cartilage is smooth and resilient but susceptible to wear and tear. Once the cartilage begins to break down it is difficult to stop and often the cartilage breaks down completely and wears away. This can cause soreness, swelling, and stiffness, and it is the beginning stages of osteoarthritis, or bone rubbing against bone, which in turn causes bone spurs and a great deal of discomfort.

Articular cartilage has no blood supply. The cells that make the cartilage are nourished by the synovial fluid, and hydrostatic pressure of the joint influences the health and pathological condition of arthritis. The wear and tear process can be slowed often by weight reduction, strengthening the muscles surrounding the joints, and by minimizing or reducing activities that put excessive weight on the knee joints. However, there are well-known non-invasive treatments that have helped numerous people regenerate knee joint function and tissue.

Osteoarthritis develops slowly, and the often the pain becomes worse with time. This type of arthritis is also known as degenerative joint disease, because it is often associated with the aging process. But occasionally, this process can also affect younger people too. The pain can be debilitating and interfere with daily activities, affect your ability to work and create limited range of motion in your life.

MANY PHYSICIANS WILL RECOMMEND SURGERY, BUT DO YOU REALLY NEED IT?



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Viscosupplementation is an FDA approved, guided, hyaluronic acid injection. It is a gel like substance that is very similar to the synovial fluid in our joints, which reduces inflammation and increases cushioning and lubrication of your knees immediately. This treatment protocol is used to treat the symptoms associated with arthritis.

Viscosupplementation (also known as hyaluronic acid injection) involves injecting a lubricating fluid into the knee joint to promote more comfortable knee movement, reduce friction in the joint, and slow the progression of arthritis. This treatment is also commonly paired with physical therapy to help strengthen the joint and improve range of motion. At Physicians Rehabilitation, we perform viscosupplementation with the guidance of advanced fluoroscopic technology to achieve enhanced precision and provide our patients with optimal results. Viscosupplementation is considered to be a safe procedure, and is covered by Medicare and most insurances.

PRP (Platelet-Rich Plasma)

Fortunately for our patients today, advances in science have allowed us to find new and targeted approaches to treating degeneration and injuries. Platelet-rich plasma or PRP is an "autologous blood therapy" that uses a patient's own blood components to stimulate a healing response in damaged tissues. PRP provides an alternative to surgery by promoting safe and natural healing.

Research studies and clinical practice have shown PRP therapy is very effective at relieving pain and returning patients to their normal lives. Both ultrasound and MRI images have shown definitive tissue repair after PRP therapy, confirming the healing process. The need for surgery can also be greatly reduced by treating injured tissues before the damage progresses and the condition is irreversible.

Physicians Rehabilitation

We are a leading provider of nonsurgical orthopedic solutions in the Florida. We cater to patients of all ages and lifestyles who are at their wit's end with symptoms of osteoarthritis and other debilitating joint conditions. If you're ready to find meaningful relief from your knee pain, we encourage you to consult with our board-certified physicians about your non-surgical treatment options – even if other doctors have told you that surgery is the only answer.

CBD'S BENEFITS IN COMBATING PTSD

Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) is a debilitating condition that affects millions worldwide. While traditional treatment options exist, an alternative approach has gained significant attention: cannabidiol (CBD). CBD, a non-intoxicating compound derived from the cannabis plant, has shown promise in alleviating the symptoms of PTSD. In this article, we will explore the potential benefits of CBD in helping combat PTSD and shed light on its mechanism of action.

Understanding PTSD and its Impact

Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder is a mental health condition triggered by a traumatic event, causing persistent and distressing symptoms. Individuals with PTSD often experience flashbacks, nightmares, anxiety, and hypervigilance, significantly affecting their quality of life. Traditional treatment approaches, such as therapy and medication, can be effective, but they may not work for everyone. This has led to the exploration of alternative treatments like CBD.

CBD's Potential Therapeutic Effects

CBD interacts with the body's endocannabinoid system (ECS), which plays a crucial role in regulating various physiological processes, including mood, sleep, and stress responses. Research suggests that CBD may help alleviate PTSD symptoms by modulating the ECS and reducing anxiety and fear-related behaviors. Studies have shown that CBD can promote relaxation, improve sleep quality, and reduce the intensity of intrusive thoughts and nightmares. These potential therapeutic effects make CBD an intriguing option for individuals struggling with PTSD.



Regulation of Stress Responses

CBD has been found to have a regulatory effect on the stress response system in the brain. It can modulate the release of stress hormones like cortisol and adrenaline, which are often dysregulated in individuals with PTSD. By reducing the hyperarousal and hypervigilance associated with the disorder, CBD may help individuals regain control over their emotional and physiological responses to stressors.

Non-Addictive and Well-Tolerated

One of the significant advantages of CBD as a potential treatment for PTSD is its safety profile. Unlike tetrahydrocannabinol (THC), another prominent compound found in cannabis, CBD is non-intoxicating and does not produce psychoactive effects. It is also non-addictive, making it a viable option for long-term use. Additionally, CBD has shown a good tolerability profile, with minimal side effects reported, such as mild drowsiness or dry mouth.

While research on CBD's potential benefits in combatting PTSD is still in its early stages, preliminary findings indicate promising results. CBD's ability to modulate the endocannabinoid system, regulate stress responses, and promote relaxation make it an attractive alternative treatment for individuals with PTSD. However, it is essential to consult with a healthcare professional before considering CBD as a treatment option. Further research and clinical trials are needed to establish CBD's efficacy, optimal dosage, and long-term effects in managing PTSD symptoms.

About Hemp Joi

It all started back in 2019, we set out to change the way the world deals with chronic aches and pains. Having a background in functional medicine and a passion for entrepreneurship, we set out to bring quality products to the greater SW Florida area and beyond.

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Medicare Things to Know...

By Ulla-Undine Merritt (Dee) National Producer Number (NPN) 8853366

CMS (Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services)

CMS regulates marketing and plan presentations, including when companies are allowed to market, and how they market. **Unsolicited direct contact that was not requested or initiated by the consumer is prohibited.** This includes in-person (e.g., door-to-door marketing), telephonic (e.g., outbound telemarketing), electronic (e.g., email, voicemail messages, text messages) solicitation. DO NOT give anyone that contacts you without your permission your personal information.

There are companies that are using unethical marketing practices; do not let yourself be taken advantage of. Medicare and Social Security will never call you unless you reached out to them for a return call. There are companies calling individuals pretending to be Medicare, claiming to be there to help. Again, **Medicare will not call you to enroll you in a plan!** Some companies that may have your prescription Part D drug plan have been calling customers saying they are entitled to some free benefits. They try to switch you to an Advantage Plan Part C because they are more profitable. If that occurs you will not have Original Medicare anymore and, since it is illegal to have an Advantage Plan and a Medicare Supplement (Medigap) at the same time, you will lose your Medicare Supplement plan. You might never be able to get a supplement plan again. You must medically qualify for a supplement plan; if when you re-apply you are older and have developed illnesses that come with age, you could be ineligible.

Florida is an entry age state for Medicare Supplements; this means that all premium increases will be based off the age you were when you joined the plan. There are lower cost Medicare Supplements that work well if you are healthy and do not need a lot of care. The price of the lower cost supplement plan plus the out-of-pocket maximum you could pay if you got really sick is still less than the out-of-pocket maximum cost of most Advantage Plans. Insurance agents and insurance companies like to sell Advantage Plans because they make more money. I'm not saying they are bad, but you need to understand the true differences and what could happen in the future.



Did you miss Medicare/Health Insurance Open Enrollment?

THERE ARE: Special Enrollment Periods

- You turn 65 or are new to Medicare
- MOVING out of the Area, Moving to a New Area.
- You qualify for extra help with Medicare Prescription Drugs
- You dropped a Medigap Policy for the 1st time within the 1st 12 months
- Special Needs Plans - New or no longer requiring a Special Needs Plan
- Losing Coverage

*You qualify for a Special Enrollment Period if you've had certain life events, including **losing health coverage, moving, getting married, having a baby, or adopting a child.** Depending on your Special Enrollment Period type, you may have 60 days before or 60 days following the event to enroll in a plan.

Individual/Family Medical Insurance - There are other options available if you do not have pre-existing conditions. These plans can be a lot less expensive especially if you do not qualify for government subsidy. There are national carriers that offer particularly good plans with comprehensive coverage. You can buy them any time during the year. Do not go without coverage!

Travel Insurance - Most of our USA Health plans do not include coverage when leaving the United States, including Cruises. We recommend always getting a comprehensive Medical Travel Insurance Policy. They are less than you think and can make a world of a difference. There are Trip cancellation insurance policies that cover you for delays, cancellation, lost baggage; they can be costly but may also be well worth it; but check that the medical coverage is enough.

Pet Insurance - Our fur babies need insurance coverage too. The younger you start the less it costs as vet bills escalate. Most of us would do anything for our 4-legged loved ones. Why not cover them as well. There are a wide range of deductibles and copays. In most cases coverage starts for less than \$1.00 a day. Pre-existing medical conditions in most cases are NOT covered, so the earlier the better.

You should really work with a local broker to explore all your options. Don't invite strangers into your house or give them your personal information over the phone. With social media, Facebook, WebEx solicitation if you do not know them, please be careful. There are so many scams out there. Go or call a local agent, build a relationship and if in the future you have a question you can back and see them.

Also remember when moving you may have a special enrollment period to apply or change your health insurance coverage. Also check your wills, trusts, and make sure they follow Florida's laws and guidelines. Establish yourself with a local Insurance Broker, Attorney and CPA. Ask a professional; most of the time your first consultation is at no charge.

To learn more about your options, call to schedule an appointment:

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Failure is a Part of Growth

By Pastor Timothy L. Neptune

The Apostle Peter was a bold man. He stepped up when others stepped back. He was often the first to speak in a group setting. Because of his faith, he was able to walk on water. And, like most risk takers, he experienced his share of failures.

Faith involves risk. Failure is a possibility. But that's okay. Step out of the boat anyway. I love a small part of a speech given by President Teddy Roosevelt back in 1910. He said,

"It is not the critic who counts; not the man who points out how the strong man stumbles, or where the doer of deeds could have done them better. The credit belongs to the man who is actually in the arena, whose face is marred by dust and sweat and blood; who strives valiantly; who errs, who comes short again and again, because there is no effort without error and shortcoming; but who does actually strive to do the deeds; who knows great enthusiasms, the great devotions; who spends himself in a worthy cause; who at the best knows in the end the triumph of high achievement, and who at the worst, if he fails, at least fails while daring greatly, so that his place shall never be with those cold and timid souls who neither know victory nor defeat."

I would rather die on the playing field engaged in the battle than rot in the grandstands as a spectator.

Did Peter fail when he started to sink? Yes, he failed. But I think there were 11 bigger failures sitting in the boat afraid to even try to walk on water.

We need men and women of courage today. High-impact people who are willing to take risks and trust God with the results.

Failure is an indispensable part of growth.

The greatest lessons I've learned in life are from the many mistakes I've made along the way.

If you want to be a high-impact person, you too, will make some mistakes and need God to bail you out.

Peter took his eyes off of Jesus and his faith began to waver. But give Peter some credit... he was in the middle of a really big storm, he was outside of his boat in the darkest part of the night. Can you imagine how scary that must have been? I get nervous just standing at the back of cruise ship at night looking out at the sea!

Nevertheless, if we keep our eyes on Christ, what do we really have to fear?

As followers of Jesus Christ, we've been called to live a life of adventure that requires great risk and great faith.



Perhaps you've tried before but failed. That's okay. Admit your lack of faith and move on.

Whatever you do, don't give up, give in, or quit.

You lose more often than you win in life. There are more bad days than good days. You fail more often than you achieve. Remember that God is sovereign and always in control. Nothing can happen to you except by divine permission or divine directive.

Don't live with regrets and second guesses. Learn from your mistakes and then move on. It does no good to dwell on the past and wish you could do it over. Just keep moving forward... that's how your faith grows.

Tim Neptune is the lead pastor of Venture Church Naples, a new church located on the campus of Florida SouthWestern State College in Naples, FL. For church times and other information, visit www.venturenaples.com.

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